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BOARD OF DIRECTORS & ADMINISTRATION

FRONT ROW: UĢIS SPRŪDŽS, Treasurer, IAN GWIN, Student Representative, OLAVI ARENS, Academic Executive Director, DOVILĒ BUDRYTĒ, President, KAAREL PIIRIMÄE, Vice President for Professional Development. **BACK ROW:** JÖRG HACKMANN, President-Elect, BEN GARDNER-GILL, Assistant Director of Outreach & Engagement, JOSEPH ELLIS, Outgoing Advisor to the Board, KRISTO NURMIS, Outgoing Student Representative, ANDRES KASEKAMP, Outgoing Director-at-Large, BRADLEY WOODWORTH, Vice President of Conferences, DAUNIS AUERS, Director-At-Large, INETA DABAŠINSKIENĒ, Outgoing Vice President for Professional Development, LIISI ESSE, Administrative Executive Director.



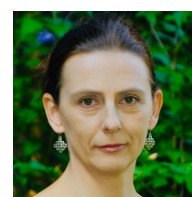
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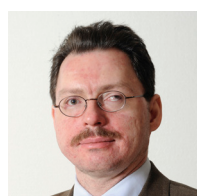
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NEW BOARD MEMBERS SHARE VISION FOR BALTIC STUDIES & AABS



PRESIDENT-ELECT: JÖRG HACKMANN, UNIVERSITY OF SZCZECIN

BALTIC STUDIES HAVE BEEN DYNAMICALLY DEVELOPING during recent years across many boundaries — between scholars from Northern America and Europe (and beyond), between the three Baltic nations/states (as the core of AABS) and other parts of the Baltic Sea region, and between the disciplines of cultural, historical, and social studies.

My approach to Baltic Studies is shaped by an open and broad regional approach, and I intend to develop this concept within AABS during my tenure. Russia's war against Ukraine, however, poses new challenges to Baltic Studies, as this watershed directly affects the Baltic region. Contributing to the positioning of Baltic Studies under these circumstances will be a priority in the years to come.

VICE PRESIDENT FOR PUBLICATIONS: DIANA MINCYTE, CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

I AM PLEASED TO JOIN the Association for the Advancement of Baltic Studies Board as vice-president for publications. During my tenure I will promote research on the Baltic region by seeking out new venues for disseminating and highlighting the excellent work in our field. My focus will be on supporting publications of young and early-career scholars whose research touches on the Baltics. Joining the ongoing efforts to re-envision East, Central, and Northern European area studies, I will work with other Board members to forge collaborations with other professional associations and academic institutions to advance more grounded, inclusive, and democratic area studies.



KAAREL PIIRIMÄE, UNIVERSITY OF TARTU

I HAVE PARTICIPATED in almost all of the AABS conferences since the legendary 2014 Yale conference, organized jointly with the Scandinavianists, and in most of the Baltic Studies in Europe conferences since 2013, so AABS has been an important part of my career. I value the friendly, family-like spirit at AABS events, thus I had few qualms about accepting this role. It will take time to settle in, but right now I think my job will be to assess scholarship applications and works submitted to competition, but it will also be important to spread the word and advertise the various scholarships and prizes that AABS hands out every year — always bearing in mind the larger objective of advancing the idea of the Baltic Studies in North America, the Baltic countries, and globally.

VICE PRESIDENT FOR CONFERENCES: BRADLEY WOODWORTH, UNIVERSITY OF NEW HAVEN/YALE UNIVERSITY

AS VICE PRESIDENT FOR CONFERENCES, I will coordinate the work of the AABS in holding the association's 2024 conference at Yale University in New Haven, Connecticut. The projected dates for the conference are June 14-16. Yale was home to the association's 2014 conference, and we aim to build on that earlier success. The 2024 conference will emphasize issues of security in the Baltic region. In addition, we will highlight ties between the Baltic, Belarus, and Ukraine as well as the aid being given Ukraine by the peoples of the Baltic. Sveiki atvykę į New Haven! Laipni lūdzam Ēnheivenā! Tere tulemast New Havenisse!



STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE: IAN GWIN, UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON

AS THE NEW STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE, I hope to advocate for university students who specialize or are interested in the region. While I'm lucky to attend an institution like University of Washington which includes the region within Scandinavian Studies, I'm aware that the lesser taught languages, cultures, and histories of the Baltic region can be challenging to pursue at other research institutions, and aim to make access to scholarship on the region more approachable and inclusive. Solidarity with other scholars in the area and the desire to take on a more active role as an intellectual specializing in the Baltic region were what drew me to joining the board in a leadership position.

BEN GARDNER-GILL: ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF OUTREACH & ENGAGEMENT

TELL US A LITTLE ABOUT YOUR BACKGROUND & CONNECTION TO BALTIC STUDIES.

I'm originally from California, where I was born, raised, and stayed for university, graduating with my Bachelor's with honors from Stanford University. After my first year, I went to Tallinn for an internship at the Museum of Occupations (now Vabamu), which was coordinated by Liisi Esse, who's now AABS Administrative Executive Director. I fell in love with Estonia very quickly — the beauty of the country and its culture, the kindness of the people, everything. I gained some exposure to Baltic Studies through my internship at the museum, and proceeded to focus the remaining years of my degree on the region, especially honing in on contemporary history and politics since 1989. I've also had the pleasure of visiting Latvia and Lithuania since that internship, and returning to Estonia for the Laulupidu song festival in 2019.

WHAT DREW YOU TO THIS ROLE AT AABS?

Beyond the regional interest, I was intrigued by the sense that this role would keep me busy with a variety of tasks, and allow me room to take initiative and grow. That's been borne out in spades. Because I'm at the beginning of my career, those traits in a job are critical, and I'm grateful that this role has them.

WHAT HAS BEEN MOST ENGAGING & ENJOYABLE?

The most enjoyable, by far, was meeting everyone at the conference in Seattle. There's nothing that can replicate that, even though we've all managed to make Zoom work for the last two years. "Engaging" is difficult to answer because there are several possible responses, not to mention in-person engagement, of course. I'd say fundraising, for one, because it required a great deal of effort to do everything that was needed and make sure it synchronized well: familiarizing myself with the existing donor base, brainstorming potential new donors, crafting messaging, etc. Social media also requires constant synchronization and planning, which I enjoy. In short, spreadsheets.

WHAT CHALLENGES CAN YOUR ROLE CAN HELP FILL?

The Association has had, and continues to have, excellent stewardship in so many regards. So, while I can identify challenges, they're challenges of growth, not a matter of solving

problems. The chief among them is to answer and execute on the key question: What public image and role does AABS desire, and how can we get there? It's a big question, and difficult to tackle. We are, naturally, in a particular niche, and it's likely more productive for us to fill that niche than try to break out of it.

Another challenge to mention is highly specific to conference fundraising. For many years, AABS has had the pleasure of hosting its conference at institutions that provide significant logistical and financial support. But the number of those institutions is limited, and if we stay only within those bounds, we have to wonder what we may be missing. If we can build up enough internal infrastructure to support the conference, such that we don't need to rely on the host institution quite as much, that opens the door to more opportunities. That's hugely promising and exciting, and I was happy to help advance that in some measure with our team's work on AABS 2022.

DO YOU HAVE NEW PLANS FOR MEMBER ENGAGEMENT?

Because AABS is a membership-based organization, it's critical that we maintain an open dialogue with our members. I and my colleagues in the AABS Executive Office are driven by members — we go where you tell us. We absolutely love to hear of members' successes: books, jobs, presentations, graduations, whatever it may be! Now that the conference is over, I'll be focused on promoting grants and awards, our quarterly e-newsletter, and also undertaking some more technical projects that will allow us to understand what our digital footprint looks like.

HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT THE FUTURE OF BALTIC STUDIES?

Unambiguously optimistic. The Baltic states are once again near the forefront of the Transatlantic dialogue. While this stems from the Russian invasion of Ukraine and corresponding security concerns, it will also raise the profile of non-security topics in our interdisciplinary field. We're already seeing some of that rippling effect, even in the span of a few months, so I can only imagine what it looks like down the road. With this visibility comes serious responsibility. The Baltic Studies community has to meet the call, including from policymakers, fellow academics in other fields, and the lay public, to provide the information and insights that our societies need.



PRESIDENT'S REPORT

IN SOLIDARITY WITH UKRAINE: THE STATE OF BALTIC STUDIES TODAY

DOVILĖ BUDRYTĖ

FOLLOWING THE TRADITION OF MY PREDECESSORS, I would like to offer several thoughts about the state of the Baltic Studies today, highlighting the importance of the war of aggression waged by Russia in Ukraine, and to offer some personal remarks introducing myself to you.

One of the most important strengths of Baltic Studies is its transnationalism — its ability to move successfully between different regions, as the borders of these regions are in flux, especially with the war in Ukraine going on. The transnationalism associated with Baltic Studies empowers scholars working in this field to relatively easily apply insights from their work in the Baltic region to the broader region of Central and Eastern Europe — including, of course, Ukraine. To give a specific example, drawing on her work on violence against women in the Baltic states, specifically, Latvia, Dr. Daina Eglitis recently published a moving piece in *New Eastern Europe*, arguing that the crimes of Bucha, especially the crimes against women and girls, actually have a long history. She argued that in order

to understand these crimes, it is essential to recall the legacy of World War II and remember the experiences of those who suffered at the hands of the Soviet Army during World War II. This example demonstrates how the topics and themes explored by many Baltic scholars — such as trauma associated with World War II, gender studies and memory — help to transcend national and regional borders and offer important

It is a very empowering time for Baltic scholars — when our voices matter and when they are heard by many people outside our own scholarly community.

insights into the war in Ukraine. I am sure that this will happen more often in the future, and I am not at all surprised that so many Baltic scholars drawing on their knowledge of the broader region have been sharing their insights about the war in Ukraine with their communities

and mass media. Indeed, this is a very special time; I would say, a very empowering time for Baltic scholars — when our voices matter and when they are heard by many people outside our own scholarly community.

This is also the time when many disciplines, including my own discipline of International Studies, is acknowledging the power of area studies with its major strength — its

commitment to interdisciplinarity and the study of the so-called “marginal” and “peripheral” actors. In International Studies, there is a growing appreciation of the so-called “local knowledge” related to area studies and the so-called “peripheral actors” who, given the new global circumstances, have suddenly been transformed into the important actors in global politics. During the opening plenary of the 2022 AABS conference at University of Washington, we witnessed the importance of indigeneity in cultural studies, and we explored intersections between indigeneity, Baltic Studies, and other regions. This plenary discussion highlighted the importance of what in International Studies may appear as marginalized, “peripheral” actors and their knowledge, also known as “local knowledge.”

Going back to the importance of the war in Ukraine, it is clear that Ukrainian resistance and resilience brought the agency of Ukraine back into international relations, and clearly demonstrated that we cannot talk about international relations without taking into account what were in the past considered to be “peripheral actors” and their culture. If prior to the war of Russian aggression in Ukraine the discussions of European security focused on the most powerful actors, such as Russia, the EU, and the US, without taking the agency or interests of the so-called “peripheral” actors into account, we can say with certainty that the situation is radically different today. The agency of Ukraine and the Baltic states matters, and it is essential for the understanding of international relations today.

These conversations show that, in the words of Tarak Barkawi and Mark Laffey, leading scholars in my discipline who work from a postcolonial paradigm, for a full understanding of international politics, it is necessary to “wake up to the significance of the Melians and their kin,” starting to pay attention to the ways in which they resist the strong and the ways in which they articulate the legitimacy of their resistance. This implies paying attention to the use of memory politics by those who were in the past seen as “weak” (or “peripheral”) actors, such as Ukraine or Lithuania, as legitimation of resistance usually involves the use of historical memory.

These questions — the power of the so-called “peripheral” actors, including women, as well as the questions related to resistance and historical memory — have always been of interest to me. As a student of International Relations, I have always been troubled with simplifications and brave generalizations that my fellow political scientists and IR scholars were eager to make, and I always saw the “state” as a complex, multi-layered entity. Growing up in Soviet

Lithuania and then participating in Sąjūdis as a university student and a reporter made me keenly aware of the power of historical memory in politics.

In my academic work in International Studies I tried to include this topic the best I could into my discipline — despite the fact that memory was widely seen as a messy, unruly variable. Thus, when writing about processes associated with political community building in the Baltic states after they regained independence, I tried to identify the ways in which historical memory mattered and in which ways it affected relations between different ethnic and civic groups, as well as foreign policy orientations. I remain convinced that it is not possible to fully understand and appreciate the so-called “values-based” Lithuania’s foreign policy without taking the function of collective memory about the Soviet past into account. Similarly, memory discourses matter greatly during the so-called inflection points in international politics when identities are reinvented and historical discourses (re)created.

I have been lucky that during the past decade or so, the fields of International Studies and International Relations have become much more welcoming of the study of historical memory. There is a growing acknowledgment that memory matters in International Relations, and that it affects foreign policy and other policies of the states. Undoubtedly, the current war of Russian aggression in Ukraine has highlighted the power of memory and the power of identities, and in my eyes, it highlighted the similarities of memory regimes constructed by post-2014 Lithuania and Ukraine — focusing on major traumas such as the Holodomor and repressions under Stalin. This realization helps us to understand Baltic solidarity with Ukraine and pursue more comparative, interdisciplinary and transnational studies — something that the Baltic Studies excels in.

Returning to Ukraine, it seems appropriate to conclude with a hopeful note, drawing on insights from a series of AABS webinars on Ukraine that our organization held in March and April. I think that all of us were impressed by the incredible resilience and strength of our Ukrainian colleagues. (See the features in this newsletter for additional commentary.) During one of the webinars, we articulated a hope that soon we will see a stronger Baltic region and a stronger Europe with victorious Ukraine in it. In my eyes, this hope implies a different version of international politics, in which the former “peripheral” actors have agency and voice. I truly look forward to the next two years of conversations about these challenging but interesting times ahead of us.

The agency of Ukraine and the Baltic states matters, and it is essential for the understanding of international relations today.

OVERVIEW OF AABS ACTIVITIES

COMPILED BY LIISI ESSE

GRANTS AND FELLOWSHIPS

The numbers of the AABS grants and fellowships a few years in a row have demonstrated a significant increase, especially for the Dissertation and Emerging Scholars awards. This positive tendency, we assume, was the growing visibility due to intense social media activities and increased financial support in our programs.

This year was a bit surprising because the most popular programs, Emerging Scholars and Dissertation, received considerably fewer applications than in previous years. However, AABS received more applications than before for the Grundmanis and Saltups awards.

We assume that the requirement for the AABS membership in order to apply, COVID-19 and other factors could play a role in application submissions.

As in previous years, the committee consisting of the Vice President of Professional Development as Chair, President, and Director-at-Large, had to make decisions during the selection procedure. The committee continued using a previously adopted evaluation system which made the process more manageable.

The projects selected in previous years have undergone the implementation stage, followed deadlines, and demonstrated work in progress. However, some modifications to the original plans were made, mainly still because of travel restrictions before spring. Awardees have proposed adjusted plans that were approved.

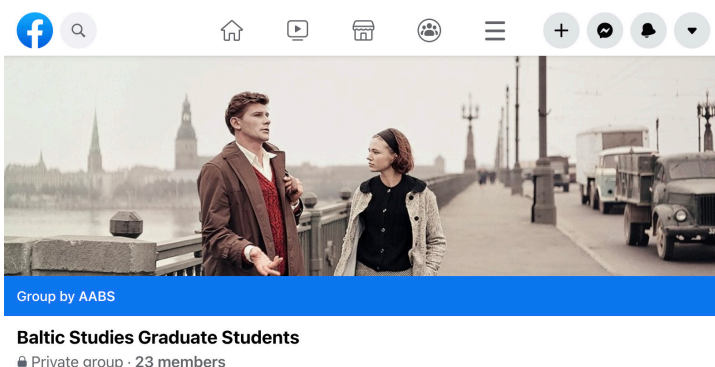
The dynamics of the applications and awards are presented in the table below.



STUDENT ACTIVITIES

As a student representative, Kristo Nurmis has seen as his primary task advocating for student interest on the board. Fortunately, we have had in the past four years an exceptionally student-friendly AABS board that has significantly increased the amounts for the student travel grant (expanding it also to the CBSE conference in Uppsala in 2021), graduate student stipends, and the amount of the undergraduate paper award; in addition, we have expanded the student travel grant to early career scholars. We can be particularly proud of our activism in securing many students and early career participants for the CBSE Uppsala conference in 2021, which helped secure enough attendees to make the conference possible.

	2019		2020		2021		2022	
	Applicants	Awards	Applicants	Awards	Applicants	Awards	Applicants	Awards
Baumanis	16	1	12	3	17	5		
Birnitis	2	1	6	1	6	1	5	1
Dissertation	3	2	8	3	26	4	11	5
Emerging Scholars	5	3	8	2	11	4	5	3
Grundmanis	1	1	1	1	1	1	4	1
Saltups	0	0	3	1	1	0	3	1
Total	27	8	36	11	45	15	28	11



During his time as a student representative, Kristo also launched the Baltic Studies Graduate Students Facebook page. Although the students requested the page, it hasn't become all that active and could benefit from fresh ideas to justify its existence. For this year's AABS conference, a committee consisting of Kristo Nurmis, Guntis Šmidchens, and Joseph Ellis (and with essential help from Liisi Esse) awarded 41 students and early career scholars conference travel grants in the amount of \$59,670. At the conference, the awards for the best undergraduate paper in Baltic Studies were also announced (committee: Kristo Nurmis, Ieva Zake, Joseph Ellis) to Ido Kons and Zachary M. Egan for terrific papers on the Livonian order and Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, respectively. At this year's conference, Kristo also organized a student luncheon with Liina-Ly Roos, Amanda Swain, Mart Kuldkepp, and Ian Gwin to discuss career options in Baltic Studies in and outside of academia.

MEMBERSHIP

As of May 20, 2022, AABS had 347 members. This is a conference year, so the anticipated number of members is higher than in the past years, but even compared with last conference years, we are doing quite well. Being much more visible on social media and through various events and activities has helped.

Our membership fees have remained the same for the past couple of years and AABS is not planning to raise them for next fiscal year.

As approved by the board in November 2021, AABS extended its current membership year (July 2021–June 2022) until December 31, 2022. Going forward, our membership years will run from January 1–December 31.

FUNDRAISING AND OUTREACH

Ben Gardner-Gill has held the position of the Assistant Director for Outreach and Engagement since Feb. 1, 2022. His work so far has been focused on two main areas: fundraising for the conference and managing AABS social media. He has also helped with the quarter one newsletter, sent

in March, and the three Ukraine panels hosted by AABS.

When it comes to conference fundraising, Ben began by building on existing work and templates (e.g. form letters, spreadsheets) and developed a strategy for outreach. The first round focused on organizational and institutional partners with whom AABS had a prior relationship, especially from past conference donations. The second round was individual outreach to our members and past individual donors. The third round focused on academic centers of regional studies at universities in the US, UK, and Canada, with an eye towards receiving some donations, but just as importantly spreading AABS's name recognition. Altogether, AABS raised nearly \$40,000 for this year's conference, as shown in the table (numbers from February 1 through May 10).

Category	# in category	\$ raised in category
Platinum (\$5k+) Orgs	3	\$25,000
Gold (\$1k-\$5k) Orgs	5	\$7,650
Silver (\$500-\$1k) Orgs	5	\$2,900
Bronze (<\$500) Orgs	3	\$1,099
Individuals >\$200	8	\$2,515

Ben entered his position with the remit to make AABS more active on social media, and he has enjoyed taking that to heart. Ben now runs much of the process behind these posts, including making posts on the AABS website and drafting graphics. If you haven't already, please follow us at @balticstudies on Twitter and @AABS.BalticStudies on Facebook. Numbers in the following table are all measured from February 1 to May 6 (73 days).

Metric	Facebook	Twitter
Posts	52	78 (includes threads)
Engagement	34,330	~41,900
Profile Visits	749	3877
New likes/followers	42	36

While numeric metrics are good, they're not the be-all-end-all of a successful AABS social media presence. We want to engage with our members, encourage new members, and publicize the various activities of the organization (conference, grants, other events e.g. Ukraine). To be frank, we're operating in a niche, and we can only expect so much from the raw numbers, but given that, Ben is personally pleased with how we're performing on social media in the last few months.

INFLATION & MARKET FLUCTUATIONS

UGIS SPRŪDŽS

THE VALUE OF THE ASSOCIATION'S INVESTMENT portfolio decreased by 5.7% over the period from July 1, 2021 to May 25, 2022. In dollar terms, the net asset value changed from \$4,200,998.02 to \$3,959,566.60, a decrease of \$241,441.42. This is the net result of portfolio income combined with unrealized gains and losses. There were no withdrawals during this time period.

During the months of September and November 2021, as well as January and February of 2022, the portfolio incurred negative returns of \$333,553, which were primarily the result of inflation expectations impacting the financial markets. During April and May 2022 these were aggravated by expectations of global economic contraction due to the war in Ukraine, leading to additional negative returns of \$270,162.15. In the AABS portfolio these were offset to a limited degree by an increased portfolio allocation toward inflation-protected fixed income securities.

The short-term fluctuations in market value of the AABS investment portfolio have not affected its ability to fund AABS operations. The current fiscal year's budget was financed by withdrawals from the portfolio that were executed in the previous fiscal year. The portfolio has a substantial buffer of unrealized capital gains — recent losses notwithstanding — to finance future activity.

	Beginning Balance	Ending Balance	Month Change (\$)	Change (%)
07/2021	\$4,200,998.02	\$4,265,292.45	\$64,294.43	1.5%
08/2021	\$4,265,292.45	\$4,320,456.76	\$55,164.31	1.3%
09/2021	\$4,320,456.76	\$4,203,448.16	-\$117,008.60	-2.7%
10/2021	\$4,203,448.16	\$4,336,161.27	\$132,713.11	3.2%
11/2021	\$4,336,161.27	\$4,317,137.63	-\$19,023.64	-0.4%
12/2021	\$4,317,137.63	\$4,413,550.55	\$96,412.92	2.2%
01/2022	\$4,413,550.55	\$4,281,473.81	-\$132,076.74	-3.0%
02/2022	\$4,281,473.81	\$4,216,029.54	-\$65,444.27	-1.5%
03/2022	\$4,216,029.54	\$4,229,718.75	\$13,689.21	0.3%
04/2022	\$4,229,718.75	\$4,010,260.29	-\$219,458.46	-5.2%
05/2022	\$4,010,260.29	\$3,959,556.60	-\$50,703.69	-1.3%
Total			-\$241,441.42	-5.7%

BALTIC
WAYS
podcast



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EDITOR'S REPORT

NEWS FROM JOURNAL OF BALTIC STUDIES

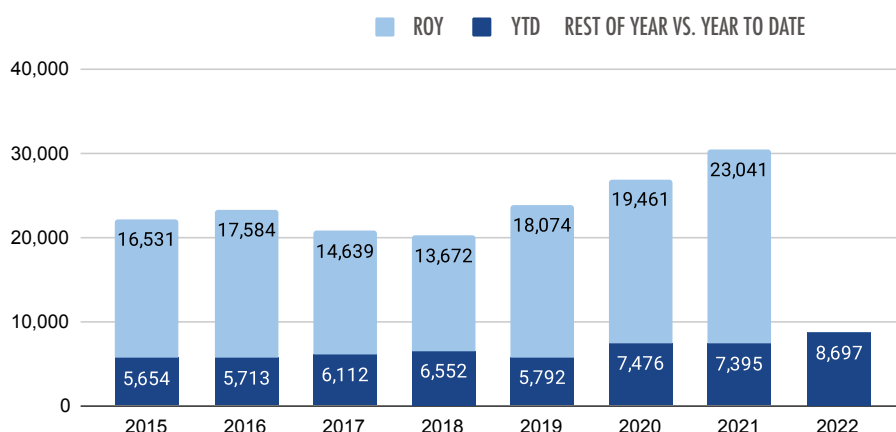
MATTHEW KOTT

THINGS HAVE BEEN BUSY for the *Journal of Baltic Studies* editorial team. With the return to on-site in-person conferences becoming the norm once again, JBS has made an effort to maintain its visibility in the marketplace of scholarly journals. In April, the editor participated in a roundtable on academic publishing at the British Association for Slavonic and East European Studies in Cambridge. More recently, the journal was present at the AABS conference in Seattle, both physically and virtually. Continuing an initiative started at the AABS conference in Stanford, JBS sponsored a breakfast session hosted by the assistant editor, Michael Loader. For the first time, on the suggestion of the AABS conference organizing team, JBS also produced a Virtual Special Issue (VSI) comprising a selection of recently published articles illustrating the theme of the conference. These selected articles will all be available for free access for a limited time. You can find the VSI “Baltic Studies as Crossroads” on the journal website under the “Collections” tab. If this initiative is appreciated by readers and conference

attendees, we will likely do this for future Baltic Studies conferences as well.

Another development for the journal involves special sections. These are guest edited clusters of articles around a common theme, similar to a special issue, but limited to three to five texts. Volume 52, Issue 3 last year included the well-received special section, “Nation-building in the Baltic states: Thirty years of independence.” Over the next few issues, there will be a steady stream of special sections on topics ranging from Baltic experiences of World War I; the societal impact of the Ignalina Nuclear Power Plant; and Baltic media landscapes. This is in addition to some full-fledged special issues that we have in the pipeline. We hope that special sections will become a semi-regular appearance in JBS, and that readers will appreciate the chance to look at a handful of articles in a dialogue with one another — something we all tend to do too little of in this age of searching databases for individual articles that are often read in a contextual vacuum.

Article Downloads - Taylor & Francis Online Usage



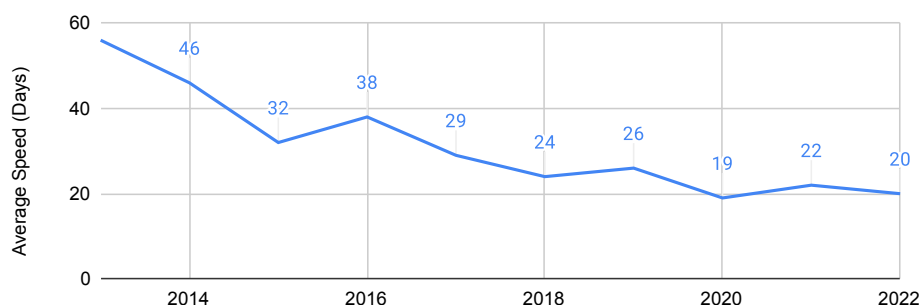
FULL TEXT DOWNLOADS BY REGION

- Europe 46K (70%)
- North America 10K (16%)
- Asia 6K (9%)
- Australasia 2K (3%)

NOTES FROM T&F

- Usage increased by **13%** from 2020 to 2021
- **4** of the top 10 downloaded articles over the past year are Open Access
- “The file on operation ‘Priboi’: A re-assessment of the mass deportations of 1949” (Strods, H. & Kott, M., 2007) has had the **top Altmetric score** over the past 12 months, having been cited by three additional Wikipedia pages (two Italian, one Russian)
- Taylor and Francis will remove maximum page budgets from 2023, allowing Editors to have more flexibility in curating and compiling journal issues and volumes.

Average Speed of Article Publication*



*MEAN DAYS FROM SUBMISSION TO CENTRAL ARTICLE TRACKING SYSTEM TO ONLINE PUBLICATION



AABS HAS EMERGED STRONGER FROM THE PANDEMIC

DAUNIS AUERS

THE MAY 29, 2022 MEMBER MEETING on the last day of the 28th biennial AABS Conference at the University of Washington in Seattle was AABS' first member meeting in four years, since the 26th biennial AABS Conference at Stanford University in 2018. The COVID-19 pandemic had, of course, led to the first conference cancellation in AABS' 50-plus-year history. Conference chair Joseph Ellis' hard work in putting together a splendid 2020 conference program at Queens University, Charlotte, North Carolina, was lost as the organizers and the AABS board made the timely decision to cancel the conference to minimize disruption to our members. The severe travel restrictions and lockdowns that followed proved the decision to be correct.

The AABS board quickly switched to board meetings on Zoom. Indeed, online meetings have proven to be shorter, more productive and also more flexible than traditional in-person board meetings. The board plans to continue holding meetings on Zoom, while also returning to annual in-person board meetings.

While undoubtedly causing disruption, the last two years have also given board members an opportunity to reflect on AABS' core activities and promote new ideas, activities, and directions. I am convinced that AABS has emerged stronger from the pandemic.

Prudent management of AABS' endowment gave the board the financial flexibility to grow our grants programs, awarding 15 grants in 2021, compared to eight in 2019.

... the last two years have also given board members an opportunity to reflect on AABS' core activities and promote new ideas, activities, and directions.

The board also took the decision to support an initiative by Joseph Ellis to set-up a biennial "Baltic Studies Teaching and Learning Workshop at Wingate University" in North Carolina. (He is also developing a Baltic Reading Room at Wingate University and would welcome any donations!) AABS has continued to support the Conference on Baltic Studies in Europe (CBSE), sponsoring an evening reception and student travel grants at the 2021 CBSE at Uppsala University in Sweden. AABS board members serve on the CBSE's steering committee. AABS has also expanded its digital presence, updating the web page, developing a well-received new podcast series ("Baltic Ways") in partnership with the Baltic Initiative at the Foreign Policy Research Institute (FPRI) and launching a series of webinars discussing the impact of Russia's invasion of

Ukraine. Indeed, the war in Ukraine prompted AABS to issue its first public statement, condemning Russia's aggression, and subsequently adopt a new policy on public statements. AABS' executive office has been strengthened with the appointment of Ben Gardner-Gill as our new Assistant Director of Outreach and Engagement. Ben has already updated our social media presence and enhanced our fund-raising efforts. Finally, my thanks go to Laura Dean, organizer of the successful 2022 conference, to all the members of 2020-2022 AABS board for their hard work and dedication under difficult circumstances, and especially to Liisi Esse, AABS' wonderful Administrative Executive Director.

THE ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF BALTIC STUDIES

POLICY ON ISSUING PUBLIC STATEMENTS

ARTICLE I. PURPOSE

Among the powers of the Board of Directors of the Association for the Advancement of Baltic Studies, Inc. (AABS) is the right to issue public statements on behalf of the AABS. The AABS Board of Directors may receive requests from its members (including members of the Board of Directors), other individual scholars, or scholarly organizations to issue written or oral public statements, made on behalf of the AABS to any other entity on a particular issue. The Board may also receive requests to co-sign existing statements issued by other individuals or organizations. To ensure that the Board handles all such requests fairly and swiftly, the following Policy on Issuing Public Statements has been adopted.

This policy covers the procedure related to public statements issued by the AABS Board of Directors and does not affect the ability and right to issue private or public statements by the organization's members, including individual members of the Board of Directors.

ARTICLE II. SCOPE

In accordance with the AABS By-Laws (Article III, Section 2), which reads "While the Association helps develop better public understanding and appreciation of Baltic issues, it seeks neither to influence any legislation nor to organize public opinion," the Board of Directors generally does not issue public statements on behalf of AABS.

However, the Board of Directors may issue a public statement when an issue is identified as critical and with the potential to affect Baltic scholars or Baltic Studies se-

verely and irrevocably, for example, but not limited to, in terms of scholars' abilities to freely engage in academic research, access source materials, or exchange scholarly views.

The Board of Directors will not issue public statements on issues that fall outside of the scope of the AABS, and it will not co-sign public statements issued by other entities.

ARTICLE III. PROCESS

AABS members (including members of the Board of Directors) may petition the Board of Directors to issue public statements. Such requests should be forwarded to the President or the Administrative Executive Director, who will bring the issue to the Board of Directors.

The Board of Directors must approve any public statement to be issued on behalf of AABS. When, however, an extremely rapid response is necessary, the President may issue a statement upon recommendation from the President-Elect and the Director-at-Large. Statements with the potential to affect AABS financially must also be approved by the Treasurer. On such occasions, however, the President must notify the Board of Directors ahead of issuing the statement and must make an effort to include the Board of Directors in the discussion.

Only the President and the Administrative Executive Director are authorized to issue the adopted statement in the appropriate venues.

The policy was approved by the AABS Board on May 26, 2022.

The Board of Directors of the Association for the Advancement of Baltic Studies condemns Russia's aggression against Ukraine and calls on President Putin to immediately withdraw all Russian forces from Ukraine.

*Signed,
Board of Directors, The Association for the Advancement of Baltic Studies,
February 25, 2022*

BALTIC WAYS RELEASES NEW EPISODES

BALTIC WAYS, THE PODCAST launched last October by AABS in partnership with the Baltic Initiative at the Foreign Policy Research Institute has continued production. Eight episodes have been produced and four more are planned through the end of the year.

The podcast is hosted by Indra Ekmanis, Fellow and Editor of FPRI's Baltic Bulletin, and AABS Newsletter

Editor. In interviews with experts and practitioners, *Baltic Ways* explores the past, present and future of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, and how these countries impact the politics, history, and culture of the geographical neighborhood. Episodes are available on Apple Podcast, Google Podcasts, Spotify and other platforms.

Below are highlights from recent guests.

EP. 8 "View from Ukraine"

VOLODYMYR
DUBOVYK

ODESSA I. MECHNIKOV
NATIONAL UNIVERSITY



"We here in Ukraine, we should have done a better job in terms of learning the lessons of three Baltic countries in dealing with Russia. ... Now, we appreciate very much the support coming from these countries. Everyone in Ukraine now knows for fact that these three countries are the most devoted and true friends of Ukraine and feel our pain. And they do more than they can, actually, in terms of helping Ukraine, be it sending weapons or hosting refugees, or sending humanitarian assistance and stuff like that. We understand that we are talking about countries which are not huge, therefore the resources are limited. They're not great powers, super powers – but to us, they are super powers because they're assisting in such a decisive way."

EP. 7 "The Energy Trilemma"

ANDREI BELYI
BALESENE OÜ



"I'm quite optimistic about the Baltic states. About 10 years ago, the three Baltic states were considered to be an energy island because most of the infrastructure was related Russia rather than to the rest of the European Union. It has changed since. The three Baltic states became way more resilient in terms of market, but still with a major share of Russian energy in the market. We have lived through this market paradigm, when competitive markets ensure security of supplies – the better market functions, the more you are resilient in terms of energy security. However, the situation becomes different once you need to get away from a dependence on physical volumes."

EP. 6 "Ukrainian Refugees in Latvia"

AGNESE LĀCE
PROVIDUS



"Ukrainians immediately got the full range of support imaginable, which is great. These are things that me and my colleagues have been talking about for a long time, that this is the type of support that is necessary for refugees that should be implemented in this way. But we did not find perceptive listeners for a long time – or we did, but the numbers were small and the society didn't expect any action. Now, the society expected action, more people are willing to help. So the, the regulation of available help also has been more comprehensive than before. Whether this will work in the long-term I can say, but the immediate response has been impressive."

EP. 5 "Who Speaks For Eastern Europe?"

MARIA MÄLKSOO
UNIVERSITY OF
COPENHAGEN



"What is the place of [Central and East European] countries, but also of the regionals scholars vis-a-vis producing knowledge about the region and the region's place in international relations? The observations ... are not terribly optimistic in the sense that if you read the big international relations, international security studies scholarly journals, the region and the regional states end up being the objects that are discussed as security problems – more or less over their heads – rather than engaged as equal interlocutors. The hierarchies ... are historically conditioned. They are also still structurally sustained in the sense that anyone who has to survive in Central East European academic institutions knows."

AABS 2022 CONFERENCE

CONFERENCE MOMENTS CAPTURED

PHOTOS BY COLIN CONNORS & LAURA DEAN



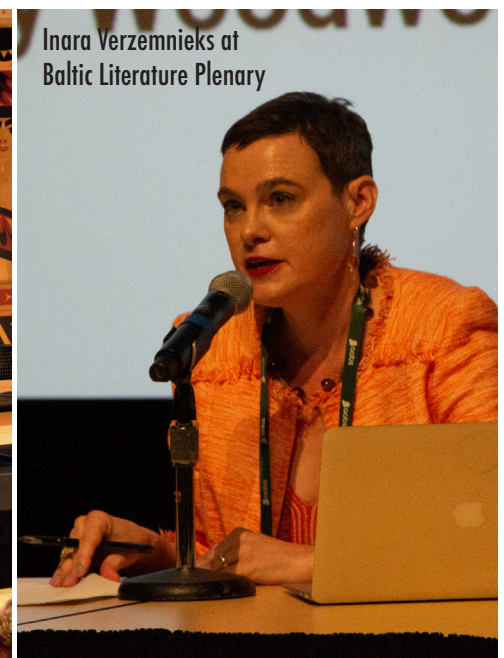
Conference participants at a coffee break



Iverson Ng at Hong Kong
Baltic Way exhibit



University of Washington Chamber Singers
at Opening Plenary



Inara Verzemnieks at
Baltic Literature Plenary



Jörg Hackmann, H.E. Ms. Laima Jurevičienė, &
H.E. Mr. Kristjan Prikk, H.E. Mr. Maris Selga at Ambassadors' Plenary



Nancy Jo Bob & Indrek Park at
To Save a Language screening



Laima Vincė at Baltic Literature Plenary



Valis Ernštreits at
To Save a Language screening



Laada Bilaniuk at Presidential Plenary
#AABS2022



Conference participants at Presidential Plenary



Conference participants at a coffee break



Conference participants at
Graduate Student Luncheon



View of Seattle from the rooftop of the Graduate Hotel



Konstantinas Adrijauskas & Una Bērziņa-Čerenkova
at Hong Kong Baltic Way panel



Michael Biggins & Iverson Ng at Hong Kong Baltic Way exhibit



Andres Kasekamp at Presidential Plenary



Lauri Mälksoo at Presidential Plenary

REFLECTIONS ON 28TH AABS CONFERENCE AT UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON

LAURA DEAN



AFTER A LONG FOUR-YEAR WAIT DUE to the pandemic, the University of Washington (UW) was happy to host the 28th Biennial Association for the Advancement of Baltic Studies Conference in person this year in Seattle, May 26-29, 2022. This was the first time UW hosted the AABS conference since the 12th biennial conference in 1990. After the 12th conference, the UW Baltic Studies Program was established in 1994 in the Scandinavian Studies Department and they were the proud hosts for our 28th Biennial conference.

The four-day program featured 94 different events including 66 panels, eight roundtable discussions, six workshops, three film screenings, two book panels, and three receptions. Because of last minute travel changes due to COVID-19 and visa issues, we transformed 16 panels into hybrid panels so that participants could Zoom in from around the world and present their research. Though many of these panelists were disappointed to miss the in-person conference, they were thankful for our quick thinking and the opportunity to participate. The conference welcomed 303 participants from Europe, North America, Asia, and the local Baltic communities from the Pacific Northwest. It included numerous public events, such as keynote plenaries by leading Baltic scholars, a triad of exhibits, and tours of UW's Baltic collections. The plenaries will be available on the AABS Baltic Studies YouTube channel for members who were not able to attend the conference.

We kicked off the conference with a dynamic opening plenary entitled *Indigenous and Baltic Crossroads* at the wətəbʔaltxw – Intellectual House serving chowder and fry

bread from Seattle's first Native American food truck, Off the Rez. The University of Washington Chamber Singers directed by Geoffrey Boers serenaded us with songs from the Baltic states and a lively folk song from Ukraine. AABS conference umbrellas proved useful the first day as participants braved the rain, which is not unusual for Seattle in summer. Thankfully, the rain stopped in time for the AABS rooftop reception that night, which proved to be a popular event where participants could take in city views of the U-district and downtown while enjoying drinks in the fresh air.

Day two of the conference continued as attendees toured our exhibition *A Baltic Choral Triad: Arvo Pärt*, the UW Choral Program, and the Baltic-Hong Kong Way in the UW libraries. Our lunch time AABS Presidential Plenary: Russian-Ukrainian War was standing room only as participants ate boxed lunches and heard past and future AABS presidents and local Ukrainian scholar Laada Bilaniuk from the University of Washington discuss different perspectives on the war. The evening plenary *Baltic Literature at a Crossroads* featured 20 different Baltic Studies scholars reading Ivar Ivask's *Baltic Elegies* and local Tacoma native Inara Verzemnieks from the University of Iowa discussing her latest research. The plenary was again followed by a reception at the hotel so that conference attendees could socialize and network with colleagues and friends.

Day three of the conference started with the *Journal of Baltic Studies* Breakfast sponsored by the journal and the Taylor and Francis Group, featuring Assistant Editor Michael Loader. The *Journal of Baltic Studies* also put together a virtual special issue under the conference theme "Baltic Studies at a Crossroads," and the 10 featured articles will be free to access until Aug. 31 2022 at the following link: www.tandfonline.com/journals/rbal20/collections/balticstudiescrossroads.

The always well-attended Graduate Student Luncheon: Navigating the post-COVID Job Market In and Outside Academia was hosted by AABS Student Representative Kristo Nurmis and sponsored by the Robert F. Byrnes Russian and East European Institute, Indiana University. Our evening plenary *Baltic States and Taiwan at Crossroads* brought a number of UW students and scholars out to learn more about these important connections, and the evening reception sponsored by the Baltic American Freedom Foundation continued into the early hours of the morning.

Day four began with the final conference plenary *Cur-*

rent Developments in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, featuring H.E. Mr. Kristjan Prikk, Ambassador of the Republic of Estonia to the USA, H.E. Mr. Māris Selga, Ambassador of the Republic of Latvia to the USA, and H.E. Ms. Laima Jurevičienė, Consul General of the Republic of Lithuania in Los Angeles. The conference ended with lunch and our AABS Member Meeting with an address by incoming AABS president Dovilė Budrytė, the presentation of awards, and graduate student/junior scholar conference travel grants. This year thanks to the generous donations from the Baltic American Freedom Foundation and AABS, we were able to fund travel and conference registration for about 40 student and junior scholars. Though it was not part of the official conference program, almost 100 conference attendees took the lightrail to Seattle Center near downtown to cheer on the Northwest Estonian Folkdancers and Lietutis Lithuanian Folk Dance Ensemble at the Baltic Night of the Northwest Folklife Festival.

We featured an AABS Breakout Lounge and book display at the conference hotel with couches and games (Jenga,

chess, checkers, cards, and Uno), as a designated space to socialize and relax for conference attendees. Since AABS is an inclusive conference, we also made special activity bags with coloring books, snacks, and even a special to UW Baltic scavenger hunt for children attending the conference. Finally, we were committed to gender equal panels and our division chairs worked to ensure gender equality on as many panels as possible.

Thank you to the Division Chairs who worked tirelessly throughout the past year proposing, reviewing proposals, and scheduling panels. We also owe our gratitude to many academic institutions, organizations, and individuals who have supported the conference program including our platinum sponsors the Baltic American-Freedom Foundation, Kazickas Family Foundation, and Stanford Libraries. Though the pandemic made organizing an in-person conference challenging, we were happy to be able see our members in-person once again. We look forward to seeing everyone at Vytautas Magnus University in 2023 and Yale University in 2024!

AABS 2022 CONFERENCE

NAVIGATING THE POST-COVID JOB MARKET IN & OUTSIDE ACADEMIA

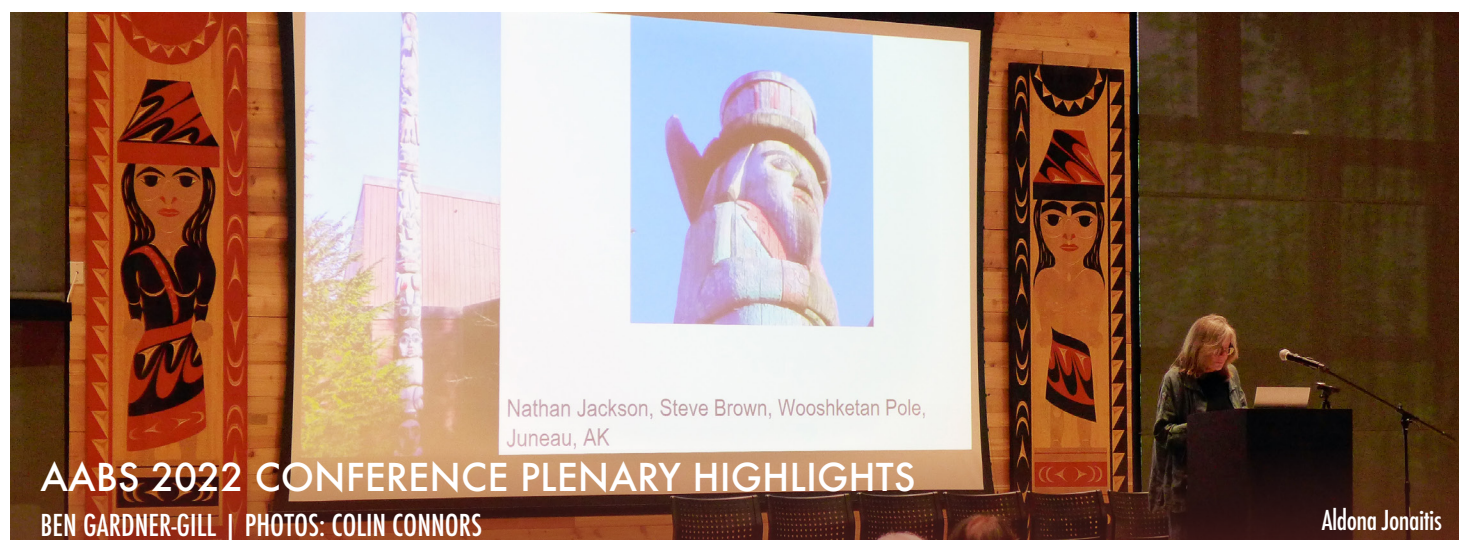
KRISTO NURMIS

AS PART OF THE AABS 2022 CONFERENCE IN SEATTLE, I organized a graduate student luncheon on Navigating the Post-Covid Job Market in and Outside Academia. The luncheon panel included two young leading scholars in the field of Baltic and Scandinavian studies, Liina-Ly Roos (Assistant Professor at University of Wisconsin-Madison) and Mart Kuldkepp (Associate Professor and Head of Department of European and International Social and Political Studies, University College London) who spoke of their personal recent experience in receiving a tenure track appointment; and Amanda Swain (Executive Director of the Humanities Center, School of Humanities, University of California, Irvine) who discussed career opportunities outside academia. The key takeaway of the luncheon was that each career path is unique and not easily replicable, but there are ways to smooth the process.

The presenters stressed the importance of knowing the institutions one is applying to and tailoring one's application documents for the individual intuitions (generic applications will be dismissed immediately). They encouraged students to make use of the freely available career manuals of major US universities (Harvard, Stanford, Princeton), where one can learn about the job search process and formatting documents.

The panelists highlighted the importance of a well-crafted and compelling cover letter in American academia, a writing genre in its own right. And while they encouraged the students also not to overthink the relevance of the cover letter (the search committees are primarily looking for a perfect and exciting fit), they emphasized that one should make the document as compelling, flawless, and quickly graspable as possible; European students wishing to apply to the US positions should invest in learning about the American application culture and vice versa.

Amanda Swain took a more pessimistic look at academia now. Tenure track positions are increasingly rare and scholars in Baltic Studies have a hard time finding their place in the traditional American field and area studies divisions (Scandinavian Studies, Russian, East European, and Eurasian Studies). In choosing a career path, Swain stressed, one should not limit one's horizons on the rare tenure track faculty positions or thankless adjunct teaching but set one's gazes also toward exiting — and possibly far more rewarding — opportunities in the governmental, NGO, and private sector, ones always in need of well-educated experts. The current world also needs, the panel concluded, more humanities and social science people outside academia.



AABS 2022 CONFERENCE PLENARY HIGHLIGHTS

BEN GARDNER-GILL | PHOTOS: COLIN CONNORS

Aldona Jonaitis

INDIGENOUS & BALTIC CROSSROADS

A JOYOUS, INFORMATIVE OPENING PLENARY began with a performance by the University of Washington Chamber Singers, who sang in Estonian, Latvian, Lithuanian, Livonian, Ukrainian, and English. Brian Reed, UW Dean of Humanities, offered his welcome and reflected on the “buoyant and optimistic” energy he felt amongst the Lithuanian people when he visited in 1990. Laura Dean, AABS Vice President of Conferences, provided opening remarks that highlighted the difficulty of organizing a conference amidst a pandemic — and the backdrop of the war in Ukraine. The academic portion of the event began with Astrida Blukis Onat (Seattle Central College) chronicling her decades-long career in archaeology and ethnography that has straddled two continents, from the home of the Swinomish people on the Pacific coast to her own ancestral home in Latvia. Aldona Jonaitis (University of Alaska Museum of the North) followed with a paper presentation that explored the similarities between Lithuanian and Pacific Northwest carved poles; she presented extensive evidence of the value that each culture places in their carvings’ abilities to invoke both ancestral history and communal pride, and how art is used to respond to — and resist — foreign domination. The third talk was given by Uldis Balodis (University of Latvia), whose work with the Livonian (coastal Latvia), Lutsi (eastern Latvia), and Yuki (coastal California) language communities has led him to develop an ethos of synthesis and access: to produce materials that are both scientifically rigorous and useful for communities in their efforts in preservation and pedagogy. Indrek Park (Indiana University) then asked “What is Indigeneity?” in his talk of the same name, and answered with an exploration of varying definitions, and consequences of those definitions, for peoples across the world. Finally, Dian Million, Chair of the UW Department of American Indian Studies, concluded the event with her comments as a discussant. Noting the throughlines between presentations, she pondered the nature of change in a community and in identity, and the fact that for Indigenous people, “our own conception of ourselves is not abstract,” in the face of any effort to broadly categorize, describe, or define.

AABS PRESIDENTIAL PLENARY

THE FIRST OF TWO SPECIAL EVENTS on the war in Ukraine began with remarks from Andrew Nestingen, Chair of the University of Washington Department of Scandinavian Studies, one of the main hosts of the conference, in the beautifully lit Oak Hall. Daunis Auers (University of Latvia), President of AABS from 2020-2022, led off participants’ remarks with thoughts on the political, economic, and regional integration impacts of the war on the Baltic states. He predicted worrying changes in Russophone Latvian politics and a slight economic downturn, the latter due both to decreased Russian direct investment and a redirection of European Union funds from traditional payees, including the Baltic states, to Ukraine in its postwar rebuilding effort. Auers concluded with a hypothesis that the supra-regional identification of the Baltic states may shift from a desire to Nordicize to a solidarity with other Central and East European EU member states. The next speaker was Dovilė Budrytė (Georgia Gwinnett College), President of AABS from 2022-2024, who discussed the war as a decolonizing moment that has birthed new identities and behaviors across the world, and how the effort to support Ukraine has transformed the



Andrew Nestingen, Laada Bilaniuk, Dovilė Budrytė, Andres Kasekamp, Daunis Auers

Baltic states from policy-takers to policy-makers. In both contexts, she emphasized the “vicarious identification” of Estonians, Latvians, and Lithuanians with Ukrainians and their plight, built from a mutual understanding of collective traumas. Budrytė was followed by Andres Kasekamp (University of Toronto), President of AABS from 2018-2020, who discussed the geopolitical consequences of the war, with particular regard to how it has fueled NATO expansion and revival. With Finland and Sweden joining the alliance, as well as a newly fueled discussion about transforming the rotational NATO brigades in the Baltic Sea region to permanent forces, Kasekamp concluded that this phase of NATO expansion is the “greatest thing to happen to Baltic security” since the Baltic states joined the alliance in 2004. Finally, attendees heard from Laada Bilaniuk (University of Washington), a linguistic anthropologist and Ukrainianist, who began her remarks by emphasizing the importance of demonstrating solidarity with Ukrainians: “It’s important to feel like they’re not alone.” She traced the history of Russian rhetoric that attempts to delegitimize and subsume Ukrainians (and Belorussians) into the broader “Russian world,” and how we can observe iterations of this centuries-long process in contemporary rhetoric surrounding the war. Bilaniuk concluded by noting that a disproportionate amount of the Russian war dead are from ethnic minorities, and grimly surmised that the Kremlin’s campaign is not just to conduct an ethnic cleansing or genocide of Ukrainians, but also an attempt to homogenize Russia within its current borders.

BALTIC LITERATURE AT A CROSSROADS

THE THIRD PLENARY OF THE CONFERENCE opened with a reading of Ivar Ivask’s *The Baltic Elegies* by 19 conference participants, both in person and in pre-recorded videos, and one recording of the author himself. *The Elegies* evoke Ivask’s feelings of home, of his love of his native Estonian, of nature, and of mortality; the readers brought his words to life in front of a captivated audience. Laima Vincė presented her work on the poetry of Matilda Olkinatė, a young Jewish woman who was murdered by Nazi collaborators in her village in Lithuania. Through historical accounts and evocative readings, Vincė led listeners through the progression of Olkinatė’s poetry, from natural themes as a child to a growing sense of identity, and then dread as she came to recognize the

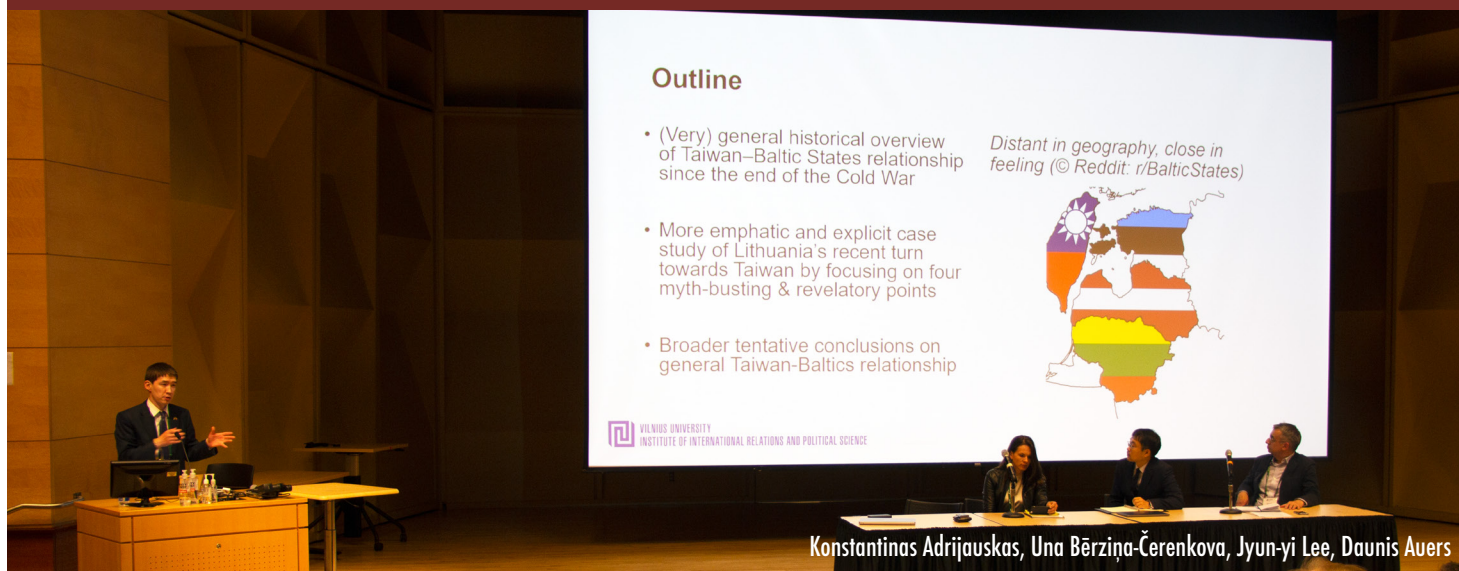


Liina-Ly Roos, Rugilė Latvėnaitė & Marija Žemaitytė

threat she was under as a Jew. The final speaker of the plenary was Inara Verzemnieks (University of Iowa), who discussed her work “The Resurrectionists: Using Creativity and Research to Reanimate the Past,” and its place in the relatively new discipline of creative nonfiction. The author described her feeling of being “haunted by a history I had not experienced personally,” and led the audience through a “craft talk” on how she used that powerful emotion to navigate her project over the course of several years. Verzemnieks concluded with a reading from her work: a description of a visit to her ancestral farm in Latvia, a place that retained its idyll in the mind of Verzemnieks’s emigré grandmother, but for the author’s great-aunt only evoked the death of her own father and the struggles that followed as she remained in Latvia, separated from her sister by an ocean.

BALTIC STATES & TAIWAN AT A CROSSROADS

THE SATURDAY NIGHT PLENARY ELABORATED on a relatively new discussion in the context of AABS conference history: the relationship of the three Baltic states with Taiwan (Republic of China). Daunis Auers (University of Latvia) opened with a brief overview of the history of the three sets of bilateral relations, with particular emphasis on the Latvian move towards Taiwan from 1992-1994, and the context of recent Lithuanian policy shifts in the same direction. The first speaker was Jyun-yi Lee (Institute for National Defense and Security Research), whose detailed talk cataloged the similarities and differences in each of the four states’ historical paths, challenges with securing support, and challenges in confronting threats. He enlightened the audience of the contemporary Taiwanese state building process, and drew two clear parallels in the four states’ experiences: first, between the heavy reliance on the United States (and its allies) for security with regards to physical threats, and second, the shared contemporary challenge of fighting disinformation originating from foreign adversaries. Ultimately, Lee concluded that each state is destined to remain an outpost of sorts, but must remain in the international order and actively confront threats in order to retain its essential characteristics. The second speaker was Konstantinas Andrijauskas (Vilnius University), who analyzed recent Lithuanian policy developments, from the first explicit mention of the People’s Republic of China as a “security threat” in 2019, to Lithuanian civil society action in support of Taiwan in 2020 and 2021, culminating in Lithuania’s exit from the PRC’s 17+1 development group and enhancement of its relationship with Taiwan. Andrijauskas concluded that the PRC’s actions in response to Lithuanian policy have been counterproductive so far, but that the Baltic states and Taiwan remain in “dire strategic environments.” In the final presentation, discussant Una Bērziņa-Čerenkova (Rīga Stradiņš University) assessed both speakers’ analyses in the context of the “Crossroads” theme, and its multifaceted implications for policy choices, acting on one’s values, and the question of the agency of small states. She concluded that the paths of the Baltic states and Taiwan demonstrate commonalities from which we can take mutually beneficial lessons. Finally, to close the question and answer session, Andrijauskas assessed that there was no possibility for Lithuania to return to the status quo ante with the PRC. Rather, he stressed, “Lithuania understands that we have crossed the Rubicon.”



Recordings of plenary sessions, including the Ambassadors’ Plenary, “Current Developments in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania,” available on the AABS YouTube channel

AABS 2022 CONFERENCE SIDELINES

SOPHIE PENG: LIFE STORIES LINKED BY LACE

INTERVIEW BY BEN GARDNER-GILL

AABS: COULD YOU INTRODUCE YOURSELF AND YOUR RESEARCH?

SOPHIE PENG: I'm Sophie Peng, from Glasgow University, and I've been a member of the Association for the Advancement of Baltic Studies for maybe four or five years. I joined when I was a master's student at Glasgow, and now I'm doing my PhD at the same institution. My research at the moment is exclusively focused on Haapsalu lace, produced in Haapsalu, which is a seaside resort town in west Estonia, and Shetland lace, produced in Shetland—the northernmost part of the British isles. I'm comparing these two types of hand knitted woolen lace fabrics. By profession I call myself a textile historian, but I'm not doing any conservation work at the moment. I shall confess that despite having lace as my professional focus, I myself am not a very good lace-knitter. I can do some basic stitches, but definitely not very complicated ones.

My research is focused on the identity aspect, and life stories linked to lace. I explore how lace as a heritage craft has shaped the local identity. For example, for people in Shetland, specifically people from Unst, because they are famous for their finely knitted lace, and also people from Haapsalu in Estonia: How do they feel themselves being “special,” that is to say the local identity, via the heritage of lace-making in the region.

AABS: WHAT ELSE ARE YOU ENJOYING AT THE CONFERENCE, AND WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNED?

SP: This is my first in-person conference since the pandemic, and I feel so lucky that this actually happened. I was supposed to present some of my primary findings at the 2020 conference in Charlotte, which didn't happen — I was very sad! In 2018 I went to California for the AABS Stanford conference, and that conference gave me the chance to visit the US for the first time. I did enjoy the vibes of community and talking to like-minded people who know things, what's going on, what's new in the field. And you know, Baltic Studies is such a niche field, I always joke that in our field everybody knows everybody. This time, I met some people I befriended at earlier conferences, so it's like a scholarly party with old friends. I think the conference is more about communication, and this is one thing — and I'm not saying Zoom conferences are bad — but this is one thing that Zoom conferences cannot offer you.

AABS: TELL US A LITTLE BIT ABOUT YOUR JOURNEY WITH LIVONIAN

SP: I got to know Estonia and Haapsalu lace because I learned Estonian while I was in China; that was many years ago already. Language learning itself brought me so much. It's kind of like opening a gate to the world; I didn't know much about Esto-

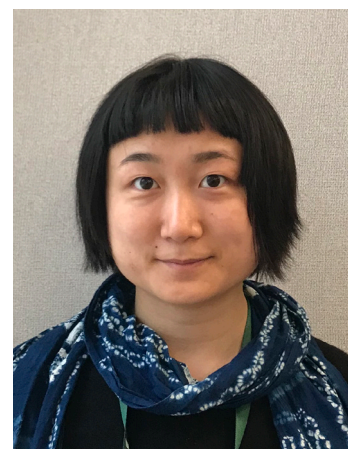
nia back then, and then from learning this complicated language as a hobby, I happen to have the privilege of understanding Estonian culture and Estonian people, and am finally here, doing research on Estonian heritage crafts as my profession.

For Livonian, I must have read something about it somewhere. I did my master's with Erasmus Mundus, and back then, we had the course structure that was one year in Glasgow and one year somewhere in Europe: Poland, Estonia, or Hungary, if I remember right. Of course I chose Estonia, and I ended up studying at Tartu University. I was offered so many choices at Tartu. I was looking through a list of available courses, and I found Livonian. My Livonian teacher was Miina Norvik; I met her at this conference as well. So I was there learning Livonian as a Chinese native speaker, knowing just a little bit of Latvian and some Estonian. I was so confused, sitting in between my classmates who happen to be an Estonian Estonian-speaker and a Latvian Latvian-speaker! And you know, Livonian, if you see it historically, geographically, it makes sense that for Estonians and Latvians, it's a bit easier to learn. One funny thing we would do is just keep guessing the vocabulary.

I very much enjoyed the course. We learned Livonian folk songs, including one that was performed [at the Indigenous and Baltic Crossroads plenary by the University of Washington Chamber Singers]. And I could follow a little bit; I was so happy! Even though I can't now say that I speak Livonian — after passing the exam many years ago, Livonian just kind of went away from my brain — but perhaps give me some time and I can figure it out.

I think this is the idea behind promoting and teaching smaller languages. It gives people, just random people from random places, a chance to know about very small groups of people. I myself grew up in a minority region in China — from my mother's background we have these connections. I observed that in the past few years people started to post things in minority language on social media, like funny TikTok clips or folk songs on contemporary topics. I think this is an interesting way to attract an audience outside the local circle. You never know what will happen!

P.S. Sophie mentioned that she and her partner are planning to adopt a cat and teach the cat Livonian. Ku võnštõit! Good luck to them!



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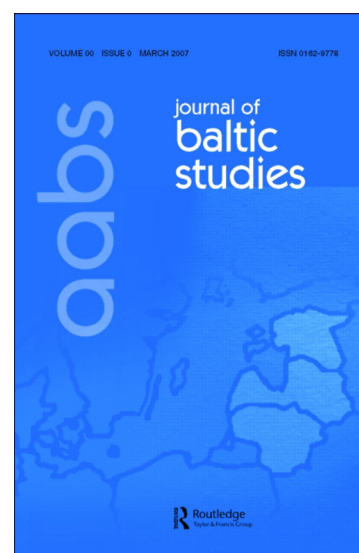
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EXCELLENCE IN PUBLICATIONS

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THE ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF BALTIC STUDIES AWARDS THE BIENNIAL AABS BOOK PRIZE OF UP TO \$1,000 TO AN OUTSTANDING ENGLISH-LANGUAGE SCHOLARLY BOOK IN BALTIC STUDIES (HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES)



AABS BOOK PRIZE:

Fragmentation in East Central Europe: Poland and the Baltics, 1915–1929

KLAUS RICHTER, OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS, 2020

FRAGMENTATION IN EAST CENTRAL EUROPE retraces the consequences of territorial fragmentation and responses to it from the First World War to the end of the 1920s. Never before had Europe's map been so thoroughly transformed as after 1918, as the Habsburg and Romanov Empires disintegrated and the German Empire was defeated. New borders, reinforced by military means and soaring tariffs, intersected centuries-old commercial, social, and cultural networks. East Central Europe, as the site of imperial collapse and of the emergence of a range of new "small" states, such as Poland and the Baltic states, was particularly affected by fragmentation. The book argues that to gauge the consequences of fragmentation for politics and state-building, this breaking apart has to be understood as a gradual process rather than as a sudden rupture. The rupturing of networks caused ripple-like effects across a vast region and across the whole decade from the war until the Great Depression.

The states that emerged from the remnants of empire were under considerable pressure at the international level to prove their capability to exist in the post-1918 order. The book retraces how, since the late 1870s, an international concept became dominant that conceptualised an ideal territorial configuration as the source for the "viability" of a state. There was little room for "small" states, such as the Baltic states, in this concept. Even Poland, the territory of which was almost as large as that of the Weimar Republic, was under constant pressure to discursively prove its "viability." The reluctance to safeguard these states against both German and Soviet revisionism was based on the widespread international conviction that these states were "seasonal" and "artificial" and thus bound to be absorbed into their resurging larger neighbours.

However, *Fragmentation in East Central Europe* does not limit itself to the reconstruction of the immediate damaging effects of fragmentation. Rather, the book reconstructs how far the

dynamics that fragmentation unfolded was creatively harnessed to build states that differed substantially from pre-war states concerning their inner creative power. Although "small states" were internationally shunned as "unviable," as incapable of forcing their political will on other states, they proved highly powerful in terms of their ability to directly influence their own economy, society and culture.

Although multi-ethnic, Poland and the Baltic states conceived of themselves as nation states. They pursued projects of the empowerment of titular nations that were conceptualized as historically oppressed. This empowerment would have been almost unthinkable without the dynamics unleashed by fragmentation, as the book shows using the example of population politics, economic interventionism and property redistribution. This requires the integration of two historiographical narratives, which are too often told in isolation of each other: the history of successful national auto-liberation and the history of the oppression of minorities in ethno-centric nation states.

Fragmentation in East Central Europe retraces the policies deployed in the Baltics and Poland to make use of the dynamics of fragmentation using several case studies: wartime efforts to build states with or against the German occupiers, policies to channel the flows of wartime refugees seeking to return to their homelands, the transformation of localities along the newly drawn borders, endeavours to empower a local merchant class vis-à-vis their British and German competitors, large-scale infrastructural schemes to adapt the new national territories to the reconfigured economic networks, and vast projects of agrarian reform that drew their legitimacy from the wartime shattering of norms of property ownership.

Finally, the book provides an outlook on the role of authoritarian coups and of policies designed to respond to the challenges of the Global Depression in consolidating fragmentation. It argues that the economic, scientific and social developments outlined across the book culminated in policies that fully rejected the international project of the pre-war liberal order's recovery. The catastrophic impact of the Great Depression on East Central Europe made it easier for German revisionists to emphasize the alleged failure of Polish and Baltic projects to integrate their territories. Interwar political responses to the challenges of fragmentation yielded two seemingly contradictory results: They consolidated East Central Europe's territorial order at a structural level, but the high frequency of status changes meant that further changes always remained a possibility.

RICHTER'S *FRAGMENTATION* TRACES HISTORY OF POLITICAL, SOCIAL, & ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

REVIEW BY TOMAS BALKELIS, FIRST PUBLISHED IN JBS ISSUE 52.2

SCHOLARS WORKING ON THE BALTICS and East Central Europe received a remarkable study that covers the emergence of Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia during the 1920s. It is a rare thematic and international history that by its geographic scope and thematic coverage may be compared to similar histories of the broader East European region such as David Kirby's *The Baltic World, 1772-1993* (1995) or Alexander Prusin's *The Lands Between: Conflict in East European Borderlands, 1870-1992* (2010).

In essence, the book traces a history of political, social, and economic empowerment of the four new nation states focusing on their attempts to gain international recognition as viable sovereign entities and to build their social and economic structures on the postwar ruins of three European empires. The author selected the Baltics and Poland due to their similar historical paths. They were also all multiethnic, with substantial minorities, while their economies to various degrees were predominantly rural, and their social structures largely corresponded with ethnic structures. Economic conflicts thus often turned into ethnic conflicts.

The key concept that tightly holds all seven chapters together is "fragmentation." Here, "fragmentation" is more than a conventional description of the shattered condition of the region after the Great War. By defining it as "a gradual process of breaking and reconfiguring networks of economic, political, social and cultural exchange" (3), Richter unexpectedly offers a very dynamic perspective on the nature of modern state-building in east-central Europe. He sees the fragmentation not only through the extent of damage brought by war but also as an opportunity for modern state-building, a rare perspective adopted by scholars in the field. The book promises "to tell the story of the consequences and responses to this fragmentation both thematically and chronologically" (8) and it fully delivers on its promise.

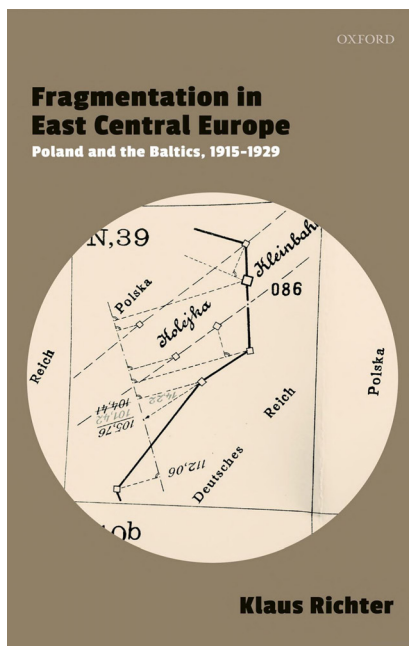
Richter first deconstructs the dominant West European narrative of the interwar East Central European states as backward, unviable, and prone to political and economic in-

stability. He shows that much of this negative rhetoric was grounded in the widespread belief that these small states, disparagingly labeled as "ring states," "limitrophes," or "borderlands," would not be able to survive due to their small and war-ravaged economies, inefficient state bureaucracies, unexperienced governments, and the security concerns of their greater neighbors. These claims came both from revisionist Germany and the victorious Entente powers that initially supported the restoration of a united Russia and

tried to promote their colonial, economic, and security interests in the Baltic Sea region. Obviously, these claims seriously aggravated the international legitimacy of Poland and, especially, of Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia. If Poland was most often accused of antisemitism, Lithuania was targeted for its pro-Germanism, while Latvia was described as pro-Bolshevik. These claims made their integration into the postwar international system slow and difficult. The author thus posits the interwar period as an international order of "small states" and investigates how the enemies and skeptics of this order tried to dismantle it by using the fragmentation of these states as an argument against their sovereignty. Increasingly, Richter claims that East Central European states were seen not as the victims of fragmentation, but as its chief instigators.

Yet, Richter does not limit himself describing the massive amount of economic disruption, border redrawing, and population displacement and resettlement that produced the fragmentation. In my view, the most valuable part of the book is devoted to showing how Poland and the Baltics tried to fight their negative image with their own propaganda campaigns and, most importantly, used the effects of fragmentation (truncated borders, displaced populations, reconfigured economic networks) to build their economies, conduct social reforms, and to empower their titular ethnic groups.

One of the most notable examples of this empowerment that Richter gives was the successful attempt by Poland to build a new seaport in Gdynia. After Gdańsk (Danzig) was



turned into a Free City in 1919, it became separated from its historical hinterland and, as a result, lost most of its prewar coal shipping from Polish Upper Silesia. Within a decade the Polish government, however, managed to circumvent this deadlock by building “Europe’s most modern port city — Gdynia” (250), which soon caught up with Gdańsk in shipping volume. Similarly, though less successfully, the conflict over Vilnius that completely paralyzed the timber trade through the Nemunas river and Klaipėda (Memel) helped the Lithuanian government to turn the city into its agricultural port.

The author refuses, however, to reinforce the nationalist narrative of “small nations” by demonstrating how their empowerment came largely at the expense of national minorities (Germans in Poland, Estonia, and Latvia; Jews and Poles in Lithuania). Richter makes the point that Poland and the Baltics used their postwar fragmentation as an opportunity for social engineering. For example, the states sifted and selected “productive citizens” from among the returning war refugees, while those of undesirable ethnic background (mostly Jews and Germans) were rejected. Citizenship became not their right, but privilege administered by new state bureaucracies. Meanwhile, radical land reforms were used to dispossess and remove the traditional foreign landowning elites (Poles and Russians in Lithuania; Germans in Poland, Estonia, and Latvia) from the social body of these societies. The interwar minority protection regime of the League of Nations was toothless: it was hated by the governments of the new states, while the treatment of minorities severely damaged their international image in the West. As a result of these radical policies, the Baltics became more ethnically homogenous, as opposed to Poland whose victory against the Soviet Union and the expansion to the East made it more multiethnic.

Much of this social engineering, the author claims, was made legitimate by the fragmentation brought by the Great War. Richter places the war (and to a much less extent the old imperial orders) at the center of his explanation of why this fragmentation came about in the first place. That is why his work should find its place alongside the vast recent historiography that treats the Great War as a seminal catalyst for the modern change in East Central Europe (Liulevicius 2000, Gatrell 1999, Gerwarth 2016, Sanborn 2014, Prusin 2010 and others). Indeed, one of the key arguments of the book is that many economic and social policies introduced by the German military regime (state intervention, monopolization, and control of population movement) survived the war and were adopted by the national governments in Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia. Moreover, Richter

shows that after the authoritarian coups of 1926 (in Poland and Lithuania) and 1934 (in Latvia and Estonia) these statist policies were considerably expanded since interwar Poland and the Baltics considered them as a remedy against fragmentation.

The book finishes with an original and thought-provoking invitation to consider the similarities between 1918 and 1990–1. After the Cold War, as after the Great War, many Western observers believed that the Baltics and Poland would have to join larger political and economic unions because their economic networks were totally disrupted, while minorities within their borders were seen as a threat to their sovereignty. Meanwhile, their land tenure established during the interwar years became a blueprint for post-Soviet land privatization.

One is impressed with the amount of research that went into this book and the author’s ability to handle sources in several West and East European languages. He used about

The book will definitely be a must read for specialists working on the political and, especially, social and economic transformation of the new East Central European states.

100 periodicals and a variety of documents that came from 17 archives based in Germany, the UK, the US, Poland, the Baltics, and Switzerland. Many of these archival sources are barely known by researchers.

Nevertheless, the book will not be an easy read for non-specialists. Often it is short on explanatory references to numerous less known historical figures and organizations. Yet, it offers an astoundingly rich, complex, dynamic, and highly nuanced historical account that opens up to the reader a comparative panorama of state-building in four countries.

Although it focuses on the complex relationship between the new states and the great West and Central European powers, the impact of the Soviet Union on the international image and social and economic reforms of Poland and the Baltics remained slightly sidelined. The same may be said about the effect of the Russian revolution on the social radicalism of the national elites of the Baltic states. One should undoubtedly accept the argument that the land reforms in the Baltics were driven by war contingencies, nationalist aspirations, and democratization processes that began in the late 19th century (300), but they were equally inspired by the socialist slogans of the Bolshevik Revolution.

The book will definitely be a must read for specialists working on the political and, especially, social and economic transformation of the new East Central European states. Those interested in nationalism, ethnic conflict, and population displacement will also find it appealing for its depth of research, the use of little-known archival sources and the ability to provide a transnational account of various conflicts and state-building policies that have been generated by the fragmentation caused by the Great War.

VILIS VĪTOLS ANNUAL AWARDS TO THE BEST ARTICLE OF THE *JOURNAL OF BALTIC STUDIES*

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VILIS VĪTOLS PRIZE 2021

How to build the legitimacy of regional
integration on rational foundations:
A case of epistemic communities in the Baltic Sea area

Journal of Baltic Studies, 52:4

KAZIMIERZ MUSIAŁ, UNIVERSITY OF GDAŃSK
& ZANE ŠIME, NORWEGIAN UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

IN PERIODS OF UNCERTAINTY OR DURING CRITICAL JUNCTURES, scientific advice may be in high demand to provide legitimacy for political decision makers. This article outlines the evolution of expert forms of knowledge and the way those have shaped Baltic Sea region building, including its consultative and collaborative frameworks of agenda setting. The selected cases include HELCOM, the Copenhagen School of international relations and the Baltic Science Network. This article offers an explanation of how these epistemic collectives have produced consensual knowledge, generated legitimacy, and engendered agency of scientific research findings and knowledge-based decisions in national, transnational, and macro-regional settings.

With regard to the rational foundations of regionalization, our study has confirmed the contested status of “reason” and “rationality” as universal concepts and independent variables. The rational grounds that facilitate policymaking must be seen as products of temporally contingent knowledge regimes. These, in turn, are dependent on the epistemic gateways facilitating policies in a given spatial-temporal set-

ting. During critical junctures, epistemic gateways enable a more intensive saturation of policymaking with scientific and research-based arguments. Each critical juncture creates the potential for endorsing certain knowledge claims as the most rational to meet the political, social, or economic needs of the day.

The example of the Baltic Science Network demonstrates that thanks to the multiplicity of avenues through which research advice is sought after and explored for policymaking within the framework of experimentalist governance, the BSR can be maintained as a sutured region, even though it arguably has a weaker potential to become an amalgamated community in the future. Furthermore, it remains to be seen how and if these multiple avenues of interest articulation and collaboration prove resilient to the apparent rifts in the region in the long run. Epistemic gateways may have facilitated increasing regionness in the BSR, but they may not be sufficiently solid to maintain the regional agenda and commonality when the logic of selfish competition between states becomes a new normal.

Kazimierz Musiał is Professor of Scandinavian Studies at the University of Gdańsk in Poland, where he also heads an Interdisciplinary Research Group for the Study of Nordic-Baltic Europe and the Arctic. He holds degrees in Political Science (PhD from Humboldt University Berlin) and Sociology (habilitation degree from the Jagiellonian University in Kraków). His publications include studies of the Nordic welfare states, research on science policy in the Baltic Sea Region and on internationalization of the Nordic university systems. Current research focuses on the role of epistemic communities and knowledge regimes in the transformation of the Nordic-Baltic area. Apart from his appointment at the University of Gdańsk, in 2015-2017 he worked as Research Leader at the Centre for Baltic and East European Studies at Södertörn University, Sweden.

Zane Šime is an Affiliated Researcher at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology and an Academic Assistant at the College of Europe in Bruges, Department of EU International Relations and Diplomacy Studies. She has completed research at the United Nations University Institute on Comparative Regional Integration Studies and the Academy of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE). She is a graduate of KU Leuven and the University of Latvia. Zane was a member of the first cohort of the Emerging Urban Leaders programme of the Salzburg Global Seminar. Her previous work experience includes project implementation at the Secretariat of the Council of the Baltic Sea States and Latvian civil service. Zane focuses on EU science diplomacy. Among her research interests are the EU macro-regional governance and the EU-India educational diplomacy in the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) context.



VILIS VĪTOLS PRIZE 2020

Masculinity in flux? Male managers navigating between work and family

Journal of Baltic Studies, 51:2

RAMINTA PUČĖTAITĖ, KAUNAS U. OF TECHNOLOGY
ANNA-MAIJA LÄMSÄ, JYVÄSKYLÄ UNIVERSITY
& MARIJA NORVAIŠAITĖ, VILNIUS UNIVESITY

WORK AND FAMILY INTEGRATION (WFI) is an important constituent of quality of life, with implications for workforce productivity, organizational competitiveness, and social welfare. The paper responds to challenges of WFI in contemporary societies and their economies by focusing on conflict and enrichment perspectives to WFI, individual coping strategies when tensions between these two domains arise, and the role of organizations in mitigating experiences of conflict. In particular, we tackle the WFI experiences of working fathers who, compared to working mothers, have received little attention, although their dilemmas in this field may be indicative of social structures of inequality that call for systemic changes in gender roles.

The paper sheds empirical light on the WFI experience by male managers who are fathers in a post-Soviet context in Lithuania. Although the society has undergone considerable political and economic changes since regain of independence in 1990 and the accession to the EU in 2004, research studies in the 2010s indicate that the image of a man as the breadwinner is still deeply internalized by men, and women reinforce this image. Despite its specificity, this context helps to capture social shifts in expectations to gender roles and changing understandings of masculinities in contemporary societies.

Raminta Pučėtaitė is Associate Professor and Principal Investigator of the research group Public Governance at Kaunas University of Technology, Faculty of Social Sciences, Arts and Humanities (Lithuania) and Adjunct Professor of Management, Organizational Ethics and Human Resource Management at the School of Business and Economics of Jyväskylä University (Finland). Her research focuses on values management, ethical issues in human resource management, gendered experiences of working life, research and academic ethics, social entrepreneurship and organizational innovativeness in a post-Soviet context. She has published in national and international volumes, including *Journal of Business Ethics*; *Business Ethics – A European Review*; *Baltic Journal of Management*; *Journal of Baltic Studies*; *Journal of Social Entrepreneurship*; *Transformations in Business and Economics* and two monographs.

Anna-Maija Lämsä is Professor of Human Resource Management at the School of Business and Economics of Jyväskylä University (Finland). She is also leader of the research group called Ethos (Organisational Ethics, Leadership and Human Resource Management). Her research interests are in diversity and equality in working life,

The findings from interviews with 12 Lithuanian male managers on their experiences on WFI, their ways of coping with negative experiences, and the role of organizations in reducing conflict and enriching WFI, reveal the emergence of a new paternal identity: fathers who perceive their role as caregivers but for whom this is still subordinate to the dominant role of the breadwinner. Despite men's experience of masculinity being in flux, the change from traditional masculinity to a caring masculinity such as involved fatherhood may not develop very quickly or profoundly in post-Soviet context. This is supported by the evidence that relying on their wife is still a man's dominant coping strategy when experiencing tensions in WFI. Organizations are perceived as family unfriendly, adding to the experiences of conflict in WFI. The study suggests that strengthening favorable attitudes to family-friendly practices among employees through human resource management practices in organizations may lead to the implementation of political programs for equality and the enforcement of legal measures which have so far failed to gain employers' support in many Central and East European countries. This might also lead to employers' involvement in extra-statutory childcare and leave arrangements.

career and gender, work-family relationship, as well as ethical approaches to management, leadership, and organizations. She has published and taught extensively both abroad and in Finland, as well as participated in and led many projects nationally and internationally. Her research findings have been published, for example, in *Journal of Business Ethics*, *Business Ethics – A European Review*, *Gender, Work and Organization*, *Gender in Management – An International Journal*, *Journal of Baltic Management*, *Journal of Baltic Studies*, *Scandinavian Journal of Management*, *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, *Leadership & Organization Development Journal*, *Journal of Workplace Learning*, *Transformations in Business and Economics*.

Marija Norvaišaitė is a Ph.D. candidate at Vilnius University, Kaunas faculty (Lithuania). The scope of her work and research includes topics of gender, gender equality, employee behavior, and organizational wellbeing. In her studies, she combines social science fields of management and psychology. Currently, the main area of interest and the topic of her thesis is workplace dignity, with its experiences and outcomes in organizations.

UNDERGRADUATE PAPER IN BALTIC STUDIES AWARDS

RECOGNIZING ACADEMIC STUDENT PAPERS BASED ON ORIGINALITY, SCHOLARSHIP, EXCELLENCE IN WRITING, AND QUALITY OF ENGAGEMENT



UNDERGRADUATE PAPER:

A weakened crusade: Signs of impending crisis during the tenure of Landmeister Burckhardt von Hornhausen of the Livonian Order

IDO KONS, UNIVERSITY OF HAIFA

THE MOVEMENTS KNOWN COLLECTIVELY as the Baltic Crusades, which encompass the conquest and Christianization of the region by Central Europeans, have profoundly affected and shaped the history of Baltic states to this day. Historians have long analyzed their impact on both the society, culture, politics, and even the landscape of the eastern Baltic, from Prussia in the south to Estonia in the north. It was a period full of war and peace, conversion and conquest, cooperation and betrayal, which has also ingrained itself deeply within the nationalist narratives of modern times.

One of the most impactful events within this period is known as the Great Prussian Uprising, which lasted from 1260 to the mid 1290s, and constituted the last stumbling block before the new state of affairs could be cemented. Previously pacified and converted natives turned their backs on the Crusaders, requiring a struggle of approximately 30 years to restore the peace in the newly named Terra Mariana, or Land of Mary. Many take the uprising to be an opportunistic revolt following the Livonian Or-

der's disastrous defeat at the Battle of Durbe (1260), in which the Landmeister Burckhardt von Hornhausen and over 100 knights were killed by the Samogithians following a betrayal by their native allies.

Upon closer scrutiny, however, the disastrous defeat and the start of the uprising seems to be the culmination of several parallel processes of transformation and weakening that afflicted the Order in the late stages of the Crusade. My study examined the description of Landmeister Burckhardt von Hornhausen's tenure as described in the Livonian Rhymed Chronicle (Livländische Reimchronik) and sought to suggest a new perspective of the events leading to the battle. The Chronicle is agreed by most historians to be a highly formulaic text, not only in structure but also in language. Divided based on the tenure of each Landmeister, it starts by praising the virtue of the incumbent using largely abstract terms, proceeds to narrate important events during their tenure, then cites their cause of death or reason for resignation. By studying the blatant peculiarities of Landmeister Burckhardt von Hornhausen's tenure, several changes and weaknesses became apparent: These include the weakening of the Landmeister in relation to local commanders, the strive towards replicating an honorable conversion like that of King Mindaugas of Lithuania, a need to adapt towards ruling a vast native population, among others. It then becomes apparent that the Great Prussian Uprising did not stem from an unexpected disastrous defeat, but rather from lengthy underlying processes.



UNDERGRADUATE PAPER:

The impact of Polish culture on the formation of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in 1569

ZACHARY EGAN,
AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF PARIS

IN 1569, THE UNION OF LUBLIN OFFICIALLY JOINED the Kingdom of Poland and Grand Duchy of Lithuania together. The two states had shared some political ties prior to the official union, such as a monarch, and the Union of Lublin not only affirmed this relationship but strengthened other political ties as well. Historians debate whether the Union of Lublin was the official start of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth or if Lublin simply affirmed a political fact that

the two states were already joined. Further, there is some evidence that a process called "polonisation" — or the adoption of Polish cultures, customs, and practices — became more commonplace in Lithuania after 1569 as a result of the union. Historical evidence, including political documents written prior to 1569, however, demonstrate that this process began to happen not after 1569, but hundreds of years before. This paper explores the content of the Union of Lublin and the impact it had on the Lithuanian state from a political, legal, and cultural perspective. Then, this paper examines the nature of the political union prior to 1569 and finally explore the cultural shifts that happened before the union, demonstrating that the Polish state had a significant impact on both Lithuanian culture and politics well before 1569.

Prior to the signing of the Union of Lublin, two other treaties, the Union of Horodło and Union of Krewo, had



"Union of Lublin" (Polish: Unia lubelska), an oil painting by Polish artist Jan Matejko, finished in 1869, depicting the Union of Lublin.

already created closer political connections between the two states. Both the Union of Krowo and Horodło, despite being signed roughly 100-200 years prior to the Union of Lublin, drew the two states closer together by creating political ties through institutions and organization, such as the formation of Polish-style voivodeships in Lithuanian territory.

It is not just via political means that the two states became more aligned prior to 1569. Using Charles Tilly's ideas of nation forming and the gravitational pull that cities have on nation-state creation, the cultural shifts from Poland to Lithuania that were strongly present prior to 1569 made Union of Lublin a consequence of "polonisation," rather than a catalyst. The Unions of Horodło and Lublin

placed Polish culture on the Lithuanian state in the form of religion and administrative practices, for example. Other examples of cultural domination from Poland include architecture, language, and legal structures. For example, a distinct architectural style, brick gothic, spread from Poland to Lithuania prior to 1569. Similarly, legal traditions, such as the Magdeburg Laws, also spread from Poland to Lithuania prior to the signing of the Union of Lublin 1569. This evidence points to the fact that the Union of 1569 was not a catalyst for the "polonisation" of the Lithuanian state, but rather, an outcome of a process that had been taking place for several hundred years via changes in the political system and cultural domination from Poland.

Ido Kons started working on his undergraduate degree concurrently with high school. Passionate about history, he won the European Division of the International History Bee in 2019, and is graduating with honors from the University of Haifa's Department of General History. He also has a passion for languages and encountering new cultures. His fascination for the medieval history of the Baltic states deepened during his studies, with a particular focus on the Crusading movement in Livonia and the emerging order of the Terra Mariana, and he sees it as a period full of cultural and religious exchanges that continue to be relevant to date. Kons plans on pursuing further research on the medieval Baltic states in a postgraduate thesis.

Zachary Egan was born in Šilutė, Lithuania, and grew up in New York City and near Boston, Massachusetts. He graduated with departmental honors and summa cum laude from the American University of Paris in May 2022 with a Bachelor of Arts in History, Law & Society and a minor in International Law. His thesis looked at how not only law and politics, but also culture, influenced the formation of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in 1569. In 2021, he was awarded a full scholarship from the Education Exchanges Support Foundation to attend the summer Lithuanian language and culture course at Vilnius University. He currently lives in Paris, France, where he works at the International Energy Agency, an organization within the framework of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development).

AABS GRANTEES REFLECT ON RESEARCH & STUDIES

AINA BIRNĪTIS SCHOLARSHIP

The Aina Birnītis Scholarship supports a year of research and writing to help advanced graduate students in the humanities in the last year of Ph.D. dissertation writing. The fellowship provides a \$21,000 stipend for one year plus \$1,000 for university fees. The fellowship is supported by a bequest of Aina Birnītis, a librarian by profession living in Carlton, a suburb of Melbourne, Victoria, Australia.



DAINA GROSA, UNIVERSITY OF LATVIA

“MY DISSERTATION IS ON THE PSYCHOSOCIAL WELLBEING of children of returning Latvian nationals, many of whom were born abroad, looking to understand the factors that influence their wellbeing — in the family sphere, the school environment and the broader social environment in Latvia. The research is qualitative (with a small quantitative component) based on interviews with parents, teachers, the children themselves, and others who are involved in the support of returnees. This study places the return of emigres to their homeland in a broader migration context, building on rather scant research to date on children and their (re)integration success.”

RESEARCH GRANTS FOR EMERGING SCHOLARS

AABS invites applications for research grants of up to \$6,000 in any field of Baltic Studies. Proposals are evaluated according to the scholarly potential of the applicant and the quality and scholarly importance of the proposed work, especially to the development of Baltic Studies. Funds may be used for travel, duplication, materials, equipment, or other needs as specified.



GARY UZONYI, UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE

“TO UNDERSTAND THE CHANGING LANDSCAPE of Baltic security alongside NATO’s siloing of the region, I propose to conduct interviews of key politicians and the head or rector of each country’s military academy, along with the staff members of BALTDEFCOL, to explore how these key figures understand the cooperative process at both the Baltic and European levels. These perceptions are crucial for understanding how the Baltic states experience the ‘security dilemma’ within their overlapping organizational structure and between the major powers that operate inside and outside these alliances.”



MICHAEL CASPER, YALE UNIVERSITY

“THANKS TO THE GENEROUS SUPPORT OF AABS, I will conduct research in Lithuania for a book on Jonas Mekas (1922-2019), the poet, diarist, and filmmaker. Using libraries and archives in Lithuania, I will investigate how Mekas’s Lithuanian background shaped him, his art and, by extension, the avant-garde in the United States. This project combines my interests in literature and art, Lithuanian history, and World War II memory.”



EGLĖ ALEKNAITĖ, VYTAUTAS MAGNUS UNIVERSITY

SINCE 2011, EGLĖ ALEKNAITĖ has been working as a researcher in a number of projects exploring folk culture revival and religion in Lithuania. Her research interests include anthropology of religion, new religious movements, contemporary Paganism and shamanism, religion in Central and Eastern Europe, religion and nationalism, religion and migration, religion and gender, heritage politics, revival of folk culture. Her fieldwork experience in 2009-2021 includes work carried out in Lithuania, Latvia, Poland, Russia, and the UK.

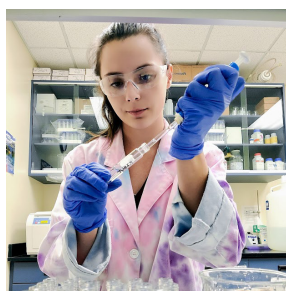
DISSERTATION GRANTS FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS

AABS invites applications for grants of up to \$4,000 to support doctoral dissertation research and write-up in any field of Baltic Studies. Funds may be used for travel to research site, equipment, duplication, or other needs as specified. Proposals are evaluated according to the scholarly potential of the applicant, and the quality and scholarly importance of the proposed work, especially to the development of Baltic Studies.



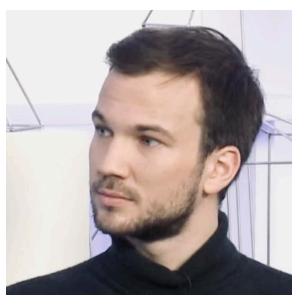
GAVIN BEINART-SMOLLAN, NEW YORK UNIVERSITY

“THIS RESEARCH ASKS HOW MEMBERS of the global Lithuanian Jewish diaspora used transnational familial survival strategies to reconstitute their family units after World Wars I and II, and to support one another both financially and emotionally through border and regime change, economic devastation, and migration restriction. It combines analysis of organizational archives with press sources and personal papers, focusing on three core strategies that these families employed: postwar relative tracing, international personal remittances, and family letter writing. Through detailed family case studies, the research will illustrate these broader processes on an intimate scale.”



ALEXANDRIA BROCK, UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL FLORIDA

“AABS IS SUPPORTING MY RESEARCH on the reconstruction of lived experiences of 254 individuals interred in the Migration period (5th-7th century CE) cemetery in Plinkaigalis, Lithuania, using isotopic analysis, statistics, and GIS. This approach will investigate diet, illness, origins, and geographic movement from earlier to later life, cemetery use, social status, and burial distribution. The goal of this project is to understand the variation and similarities in lived experiences of this population through the lens of social identity theory. I became involved in this project through a collaboration between the University of Central Florida and the University of Vilnius exploring the long-term migration and dietary patterns over Lithuanian’s history.”



TOMASS PILDEGOVIČS, UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE

“RUSSIA’S ONGOING BRUTAL AND UNPROVOKED WAR against Ukraine has recast a political and intellectual focus on the foreign-security policy of the Baltic states, dashing any hopes for a geopolitical ‘end of history’ in the Baltic region. Consequently, studying how the Baltic states have separately and collectively sought to situate themselves in the European foreign policy field would benefit from a modern historical International Relations approach. In my dissertation, I focus on the Baltic states’ efforts to influence EU foreign-security policy in response to Russia’s military interventions in Georgia (2008) and Ukraine (2014). It is a special and humbling honour that AABS has selected my doctoral research as a recipients of this grant.”



ANDRIUS JANIONIS, VILNIUS UNIVERSITY

“STUDYING SWORDS HAS BEEN MY PASSION for many years. In my Master thesis, ‘Swords with inscriptions in the Balt lands of the 9th-11th century,’ I used roentgenographic survey to back my assumptions that corrosion material and deterioration are covering much valuable information. In my PhD studies, I am employing as many physical and chemical methods available to provide much more insight. This brings my interests to a wide scale where my archaeological studies step into physics and chemistry to the benefit of all. To sum up my obsession with swords, I am studying the use of swords as of Historical Martial Arts and am the director of the School of Sword Mastery in Vilnius.”



ŽIVILĖ ARNAŠIŪTĖ, UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

ŽIVILĖ ARNAŠIŪTĖ’S RESEARCH FOCUSES on the complexities of music and politics in the late years of the Soviet Union, with a particular focus on the relationships between the Soviet Republics to the Union as a whole and the impact of the Singing Revolution in the Baltic states. Her dissertation project titled “Small Voices: Musical Practice and Communist Ideology in Peripheral (Post) Soviet Republics” concentrates on the Soviet-wide cultural policies and three Soviet Republics — Latvia, Lithuania, and Ukraine.

JĀNIS GRUNDMANIS GRADUATE AND POSTGRADUATE FELLOWSHIP

The Jānis Grundmanis Graduate and Postgraduate Fellowship, established in the memory of Dr. Jānis Grundmanis, is an annual fellowship of \$20,000 for graduate or postgraduate study in the United States. Recipients of the fellowship must be citizens of the Republic of Latvia, speak Latvian, and have their permanent residence in Latvia. Preference is given to applicants studying in the field of humanities or social sciences.



ALISE PUNDURE, COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

“THE JĀNIS GRUNDMANIS POSTGRADUATE FELLOWSHIP for Study in the US will support the completion of my graduate studies in Arts Administration at Teachers College, Columbia University. For my master's thesis, I will conduct research on the implementation of digitized museum collections in US museums. I am interested in innovative museum administration, digital marketing, and the intersection of art and technology. I hope to bring best practices in arts administration to Latvian cultural organizations after graduation.”

MUDĪTE I. ZILĪTE SALTUPS FELLOWSHIPS

AABS invites applications for Short-Term Study or Research Grants for up to eight weeks of study in the United States with a maximum stipend of \$10,000.

The grants are funded from a bequest in memory of Dr. Mudīte I. Zilīte Saltups. Dr. Saltups' will provides that recipients of a fellowship must be citizens of the Republic of Latvia, speak Latvian, have their permanent residence in Latvia, and come to the United States to study or conduct research.



MĀRTIŅŠ KAPRĀNS, UNIVERSITY OF LATVIA

OVER THE PREVIOUS DECADE, Mārtiņš Kaprāns has been involved in several large-scale research projects on Baltic labor migrants, Russian-speaking communities in the Baltic states, ideological polarization in Baltic societies, ethnic stereotypes and prejudices in Latvia, and historical politics in Baltic countries and Central Europe. Currently, Kaprāns is the head of Latvian state research program “The archaeology of independence: Towards a new conceptual perspective on national resistance in Latvia.”



WAR IN UKRAINE

UKRAINIAN SCHOLARS SHARE IMPACTS OF WAR ON TEACHING, RESEARCH & LIFE

CONTRIBUTIONS FROM PANELISTS PARTICIPATING IN AABS' SERIES OF ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSIONS ON UKRAINE, WRITTEN IN MAY AND JUNE 2022

PAVLO KUTUEV

PROFESSOR OF SOCIOLOGY,
IGOR SIKORSKY KYIV
POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE



GIVEN THAT WE HAVE BEEN DEALING WITH CONFLICTS in our teaching and research for quite some time, I can't say that our research focus has shifted dramatically. Obviously we need some time to reflect upon the tectonic changes caused by the Russian war against Ukraine. Yet the direction and the focus of our thinking remains the same. Our academic activities were put on hold just for two or three weeks following the Russian invasion since a lot of people had to relocate to safer areas — many cities including Kyiv were shelled — thus academics did not have a chance to work. But then following the successes of the Ukrainian armed forces staving off Russian onslaught and driving Russian forces away from Kyiv we immediately began planning to resume teaching our students. And on April 4 — just 40 days after the begging of invasion — we dully did. Obviously the teaching is taking place online only. Our students — and faculty for that matter — are dispersed around the world. Our students have been exhibiting great enthusiasm and motivation about their studies.

It's too early to draw conclusions, yet I think the war has taught us a lesson, which is realizing the importance of thinking beyond the war. Winning the war is of existential importance. But it's also essential to win the peace. By winning the peace, I mean launching a comprehensive modernization of Ukrainian society, while avoiding pitfalls of authoritarian temptations in the post-war society.

As a social scientists we all know perfectly well that there are no ideal societies. Yet, this Russian war of aggression against Ukraine is pretty much a black and white picture. The biggest country on earth — perhaps with the biggest nuclear arsenal — attacked its peaceful neighbor denying, Ukraine the very right to exist. The Russian war on Ukraine has taken a genocidal twist after Bucha and many other Ukrainian settle-

ments that have become scenes of war crimes committed by Russians. It is Putin's war, no doubt about that. Yet the world must realize the Russian population's at-large complicity in the war on Ukraine. The world has to take a more concerted and tougher stance on Russian aggression that has caused unspeakable atrocities and suffering for Ukrainians.

I think Baltic Studies scholars have already done a lot for Ukraine and Ukrainian scholars. AABS organized a series of seminars with Ukrainian scholars to discuss the Russian war on Ukraine and its impact on the Ukrainian society. I think that work should continue. We could jointly apply for research funding to support scholars and scholarship in Ukraine. We have to keep in mind that according to some estimates, Ukraine may have already lost about half of its GDP. The government has to focus on the war effort, so any assistance and aid from our colleagues from overseas is essential and critically important.

Although I am myself from Kyiv and by the virtue of my geographic location I have been out of harm's way, the war has been a heartbreaking and devastating experience for me and my family. My family are now refugees and I don't know when and if we'll have a chance to reunite. My 9-year-old daughter and I have always been very close. The longest period of time I was away from my daughter would not exceed several days and even then she'd be just visiting her grandparents, so she'd be less than a two-hour drive away. She had her birthday recently and it was her first birthday at which I was not present. I am happy for my family that they are safe but it's tough to be away from my kid for so long and rely on online communication only.

One of our graduates who became a commissioned army officer was killed in action. Another graduate also enlisted in the army at the beginning of the war and was taken POW. Unfortunately we have reasons to believe that he's badly mistreated by his captors.

Our students and faculty are scattered around the world. It's heartbreaking to read the testimonies of people who survived Russian occupation, lost their loved ones, were wounded, mutilated, or horrendously abused by the Russian occupiers. In cities that are close to front lines, people speak about scarcity of supplies of basic foodstuffs and medicines. Sirens warning about strikes and air raids have become a part of normal life and in Kyiv people simply ignore them.

Ukrainian armed forces have successfully and heroically driven Russians away from Kyiv, but the war has taken its heavy psychological toll on everybody, and I am no exception.

MARIANNA GLADYSH

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS &
DIPLOMATIC SERVICES
IVAN FRANKO NATIONAL
UNIVERSITY OF LVIV



On 24 FEBRUARY 2022, my life and that of all Ukrainians changed. The city I live in was not shelled that morning, but the news from other Ukrainian cities was terrifying. We all had to work out what we needed to do — escape or stay, how to go on working and living, and what to expect. As we had been using distance learning before the war broke out, this meant that our students were in the different regions of Ukraine, and the first task for us as lecturers was to find out if they were safe and alive. I contacted the heads of the groups with whom I had classes to ensure that they were ok, and luckily all of them were safe.

I decided to stay in Lviv and help in any way I can. Together with my friends and colleagues, we have been doing volunteer work — helping refugees, collecting and sending humanitarian aid to different cities (Kharkiv, Mykolaiv, and others), talking to journalists (online and in person) to explain what is going on. Having contacts with military personnel, we started collecting money to buy them necessary equipment, which unfortunately they lacked. Such volunteering has also helped me not to follow the news all the time and give me a feeling of living.

After two weeks, the educational programs at the university restarted and meeting the students online brought real joy. I was extremely happy to see many of them, though not all could join the classes — some were on their way from dangerous places, some were volunteering, others have joined the Ukrainian armed forces. University authorities recommended having a flexible approach towards students in case some, for the aforementioned reasons, could not attend classes but wanted to have individual assignments; lecturers have connected with such students individually.

Regarding my research, at first it was impossible to concentrate on any research work. All my thoughts were focused on the front line and battlefields, but after two or three weeks, I pulled myself together and decided that I have to continue with my research as well. Together with my colleague from Mariupol University, we have decided to prepare an article on Ukrainian information resilience in the face of Russian aggression (national and regional dimensions). The main focus areas of the article are how information resilience in Ukraine was transformed during the two phases of Russian aggression; the role of the state and civil society in this transformation; how the conceptual principles of information resilience are implemented; and, finally, the challenges to information resilience and security during the Russian offensive on Mariupol. We believe that this topic will be interesting for a wide range of readers.

More than three months into the war ... life still goes on. We don't make long-term plans, as anything could happen, but we all believe in the victory of Ukraine and the whole democratic world. I am happy that I can work, that I am alive and that my city is not being shelled constantly. My students also give me great motivation to carry on working. They are our future, and that future will be brilliant and peaceful!



Marianna Gladyshevskaya volunteering in support of the Ukrainian military.



SERGII PAKHOMENKO

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF POLITICAL
SCIENCE & INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS,
MARIUPOL STATE UNIVERSITY
HEAD, CENTRE OF BALTIC-
BLACK SEA STUDIES



I HAVE BEEN WORKING AT MARIUPOL STATE UNIVERSITY for 26 years, my wife has been a school teacher, my 17-year-old daughter was finishing high school and preparing for her school graduation exams. Our city had been under threat since 2014, when the Russian Federation launched a hybrid war against Ukraine and contributed to the disintegration of some parts of Donbas where “pseudo-republics” — “Donetsk People’s Republic” and “Luhansk People’s Republic” were created. Nevertheless, Mariupol succeeded in persevering as a Ukrainian and prosperous city. In 2014 and 2015, several bombardments of the eastern outskirts of the city took place, but on the whole the city remained protected and has been successfully developing.

Since February 24, 2022 everything has changed; the city was besieged by Russian troops and all infrastructure has been destroyed. People survived as best they could, under constant shelling and bombing by Russian military aircrafts; they cooked food on bonfires and went to the river for water. Ninety percent of all buildings in the city have been destroyed, people were hiding in basements, many were killed (some 20,000 to date). Fortunately, we managed to get out of the city. Currently, I am in Lviv as internally displaced person. My family went to Lithuania.

I have found temporal work at Lviv Centre for Urban History and I am trying to continue my research. My research interests intersect several social disciplines — political science, history, international relations and strategic communications. The unifying subject of my research is the phenomenon of historical/collective memory. I consider it from the perspective of the politics of memory, the influence of memory on international relations and security, and the utilization of history in strategic communication and propaganda.

Unfortunately, this was clearly evident in the ideological framing of the Russian aggression in Ukraine. The rhetoric of the Kremlin and Putin in particular about the absence of national traditions in Ukraine, the absence of Ukrainians as a nation and their unity with Russians was especially active on the threshold of the invasion. Also, the Kremlin propaganda was full of unfair and absurd accusations of alleged Nazism in Ukraine, which led to the trivialization of this historical phenomenon. Overall, accusations of historical revisionism and “rewriting” of history, the so-called “war of memory” have be-

come a landmark phenomenon not only in Russian-Ukrainian relations, but also in a number of other cases (for example, in relations between Russia and the Baltic states). In this regard, historical/collective memory has become acknowledged as an important element of national security, which can be described as “securitization” of memory.

Many experts say that the Kremlin’s historical (or rather pseudo-historical) rhetoric is simply an ideological cover for its aggression. On the one hand, this is indeed true. It is enough just to review the main messages of Putin’s famous article “On the historical unity of Russians and Ukrainians,” which was published last summer. One needs only to pay attention to his long overviews of history in public statements and at meetings with foreign leaders. It all works both for the internal Russian audience and Western audience that compliments the Kremlin and is not familiar with Ukrainian past and present realities and, thus, is ready to support Russia’s efforts to restore its so-called “historical” sphere of influence.

On the other hand, I think that the appeal to history is not only a cover but also one of the goals of the “special operation” — that is, to eliminate such historical injustice as the state of Ukraine. It is totally in line with Putin’s irrational logic. His logic is based on a constant reference to the “glorious past” and neo-imperial (нио-империал) chauvinistic mindset. And that makes him a more dangerous enemy. Rather than being guided by rationality, he motivates his actions by mythologized and perverted understanding of the past. His views on Ukrainian history are based on the following messages: 1) Absence of national traditions in Ukraine. 2) Artificiality of the very idea of the Ukrainian state, invented either by the Poles or the Austrians in the early 20th century. Today, this artificial (атифішл) idea is supported by the West as an antipode to Russia. 3) Unfairly defined national borders of Ukraine. According to Putin, “native Russian” territory, which is Donbas and the Azov Sea coast with the Black Sea region, was included in contemporary Ukraine by Lenin and the Bolsheviks. 4) Nazism is the main ideology of Ukraine. This unfair and absurd accusation leads to the trivialization of this particular historical phenomenon. 5) Finally, Ukrainians are declared to be one people with Russians. However, this does not prevent Putin from eliminating them.

The Kremlin creates its reality and sincerely believes in it.

From the very first day of the occupation of Mariupol, Russian troops and local collaborators started changing the symbolic urban space. They restored Soviet street names and installed monuments of Lenin and Soviet leaders, whereas monuments to heroes of Ukrainian history are being removed. A methodological seminar was held for school history teachers (who stayed and agreed to work under the new government). Professors from Russia talked about the ways to debunk the myths of the Kyiv regime and teach children history of Russia. But that is mostly propaganda. Schools are destroyed, there is nowhere and no one to study. But all this shows that the occupiers’ priority task is not to restore city communications and normal life, but to fight for people’s identity.

KATERYNA IVASHCHENKO-STADNIK

SENIOR RESEARCH FELLOW
INSTITUTE OF SOCIOLOGY
NATIONAL ACADEMY OF SCIENCES
RESEARCH CONSULTANT
CENTRE FOR SUSTAINABLE PEACE &
DEMOCRATIC DEVELOPMENT



DESPITE THE POLITICAL UPS AND DOWNS throughout its independence, Ukraine was developing as a democratic pluralistic state and saw a peaceful transfer of power (something that was seen as a challenge for the neighboring despotic ruler). The Euromaidan and the Russian aggression in 2014 accelerated the westward reorientation of the economy, strengthened institutional checks and balances, reshaped identity towards formation of a political nation, and increased the role of modernizing forces, especially civil society. (More on societal, economic, political, and institutional transformations in Ukraine prior to the war in

the forthcoming book *Eight Years After the Revolution of Dignity: What Has Changed in Ukraine During 2013-2021?* by Volodymyr Dubrovskiy, Kalman Mizsei, Kateryna Ivashchenko-Stadnik, and Mychailo Wynnnyckyj.)

My house was one of the first residential building in Kyiv hit by a Russian rocket on the third day of the full-scale invasion in 2022. Sixteen apartments were demolished. Six people were wounded, including two children. Four hundred people are deprived of their homes. This was only one episode out of thousands now.

Since February 24, the full-scale invasion of Ukraine by the Russian Federation has created unprecedented security challenges that affect all spheres and levels of human life across the country. Unlike the annexation of Crimea and occupation of Donbas in 2014, which was the first phase of the invasion targeting mostly the local population and infrastructure, the new phase of war hit millions of people in all oblasts, unfolding stories of mass destruction, death, and violation of basic human rights. According to data from the Kyiv School of Economics, 35.2 million square meters of residential buildings, 580 healthcare institutions, 992 institutions of secondary and higher education, 562 kindergartens, and 152 cultural facilities were de-



Kateryna Ivashchenko-Stadnik with her son in Kyiv during the 2019 presidential elections.

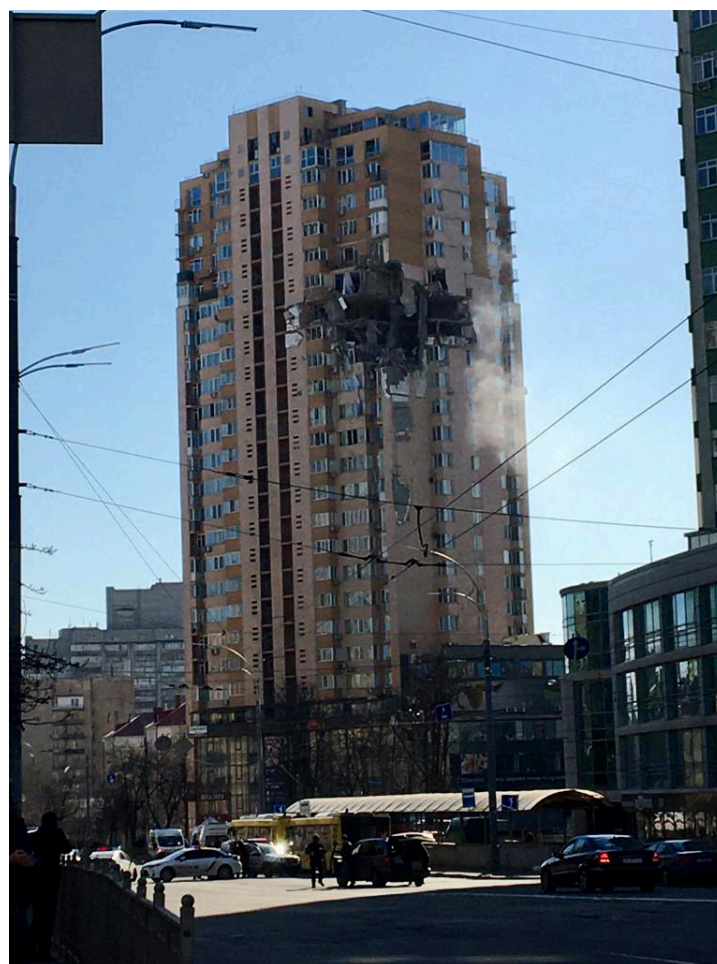


A view from Ivashchenko-Stadnik's window after the Russian rocket attack, February 2022.

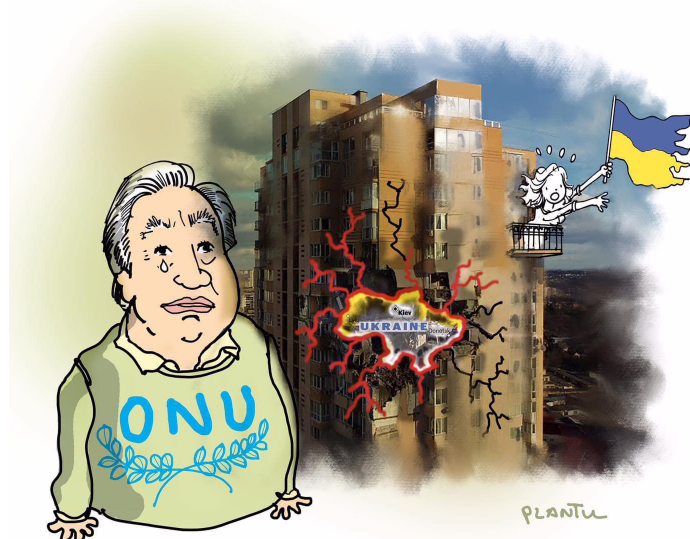
stroyed in Ukraine since February 2022. Nearly 14 million Ukrainians have been forced from their homes, including more than 6 million who have fled the country. The actual number of civilian deaths is unknown thus far, as continuing battles delay reporting. Hundreds of civilians have been found dead in Bucha, Kyiv region. Thousands have died in Mariupol. Illegal detentions, forced displacement, kidnapping, persecution, tortures, and murders of Ukrainian citizens are widely reported in the occupied areas. 1.2 million Ukrainian citizens were forcibly deported to Russia, including 210,000 children.

Apparently, the UN, again, was not prepared to react properly to the Russian aggression as an abrupt challenge to the sustainable global international order. Sadly, until recently, the language we used in publications to deal with Russian aggression was the subject of endless cautious discussions with international partners. But while UN Secretary-General António Guterres and other international actors have leaned on neutral language to “never give up” and “giv[e] peace another chance,” you cannot stay neutral when describing war crimes, genocide, and aggression. Finally, we have now seen some signs of change in the UN in April 2022, when 193 UN members condemned the invasion and voted to remove Russia from the UN Human Rights Council. Unfortunately, changing the rhetoric of speaking about Russia as a terrorist state is still a pain for many international actors, governments, and even intellectuals keen to “hear both sides,” “give a face-saving options to Russia,” and secure a decent place for Russian culture and science. Yet, are there any articulated Russian voices, options, or projects fully independent of the distorted historical legacies and chauvinistic colonial values?

Punishing and dismantling the independent Ukrainian state that does not fit the colonialist design of the Russian totalitarian project has become an *idée fixe* for the Russian dictator. For decades, it has been dispersed by the blaring propaganda machine and, as the Russian public polls demonstrate, was widely supported by the domestic public. Be it 70 or 80 percent, the majority of the public support the aggression against Ukraine as confirmed Russian surveys. What brought Russians to that moral catastrophe? As the famous Russian journalist Alla Gerber sadly noted, Russians were exhausted by their unfortunate biography, and the war against Ukraine has been trickily delivered to them as the way out ... Russian historical breakdown remains to be learned and dealt with in due time. Now, consolidated international response to the unprovoked and unjustified invasion, and massive disinformation that led to the genocide of the European nation in the 21st century is yet to be given. The war is not over, and, to ensure the aggressor’s defeat, it’s time to take sides on every front.



Lobanovskii house after a rocket attack, Kyiv, February 26, 2022.



Lobanovskii house depicted by the French cartoonist Plantu. Source: Plantu Facebook page

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